

WHAT CHILDREN MAKE OF THINGS AND WHAT WE MAKE OF THEM  
PROCESS, INTENTION & INTUITION IN THE VISUAL WORKS OF YOUNG CHILDREN  
& THE ADULT ARTIST

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# ABSTRACT

The thesis is in two parts: the first is an empirical and philosophical investigation of children's drawing practices, with particular reference to an interpretation of the work of Georges-Henri Luquet 1876 – 1965. Luquet's work is interrogated first by additional empirical evidence, and second by drawing philosophical resources from both Bergson, and from the phenomenological tradition. The second part of this thesis is a body of work, which explores types of process (some of which are derived from observations of children's processes), through experimentation in my own Fine Art practice; and reflection upon its development and significance is found throughout the written thesis, but especially in Chapter 3. Additional empirical evidence, documentation, and papers on both parts, are found in the Appendix and in an exhibition timed to coincide with the doctoral examination.

The first chapter both presents and critically examines the elements Luquet identified of 'intention', 'interpretation', 'the type', 'the internal model' and 'predilection' in relation to attention and intentionality. Luquet's analysis and observations will be used to construct an initial model of process, which is critically re-examined and expanded in Chapter 2 through a historical revision of process in Fine Art and analyses of material made by children spontaneously and without instruction using found materials.

Chapter 3 is comprised of a series of reflections on series in my own practice, and experiments derived from the taxonomy of processes constructed from analysis of the material presented in Chapter 2. It raises questions about the nature of certain types of intuition and attention, which are then discussed in Chapter 4 through examining the relation between attention and intentionality, and 'categorical intuition' as defined by Husserl. Luquet's term *Circumspection* will be compared with Heidegger's use of the term (*Umsicht*), in *Being and Time*, and reference will be made to the later development of Heidegger's thought in 'The Origin of the Work of Art', in particular the concepts of *Ereignis* and *Gelassenheit*. A fully revised model of process is proposed at the end of Chapter 4. It will be argued that the questions raised can only be answered if at all, through our embodied relation with the world via late Husserl, and Merleau-Ponty's concepts of operative intentionality; the practical cogito; and the pre-cognitive realm.

The Conclusion presents the findings of the enquiry, what Phenomenology has brought to it, and directions for future research.

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## *Introduction*

### *Aims of the Investigation*

The thesis presents the results of an investigation into the philosophical basis of G.H. Luquet's model of process articulated in *Le Dessin Enfantin* and its relevance in relation to contemporary practice in fine art. Luquet's work is examined with reference to Henri Bergson, and Phenomenology, and in particular to Husserl, Heidegger, Levinas, and Merleau-Ponty. Luquet's model is analysed in relation to collections of both existing and newly acquired material; and its relevance to contemporary practice in Fine Art is examined through reference to historical and contemporary examples, as well as personal analysis and experimentation in my own practice.

It is important to say at the outset, the question that dominates the thesis is about the nature of perception. What is happening when we see something that makes us want to make something out of it? When we 'make something out' we mean that we recognize a thing: we can see 'what that thing is'. We also use the expression to mean not only that we recognize it but that we also *understand* it, and one of the most important aspects of Luquet's work was his emphasis on the use of drawing by the child as a means of understanding, and of finding out how one thing can relate to another.

When we make something *out of* something, we may mean either that we make this first thing into something else, without changing it in any way, or doing anything else;<sup>1</sup> or we use it as material out of which we make a different kind of thing, however minimal the alteration may be. I shall be concentrating in the thesis on what initially starts the process off, and then what happens during the time that the child is engaged in the process, and then how or if it is then concluded. The principle behind the enquiry is that by examining the process that gets started as a consequence of seeing something 'as' something, and wanting to 'make something out of it' we may learn something about the way children see things in the first place. I intend to look at the nature of the moment or perception that starts it off, and what happens along the way. We might have a clear intention to make a specific thing, or we may have more like what is often termed a 'hunch', (the more common use in English of the term 'intuition'), or a desire

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<sup>1</sup> It may be that a configuration of lines or shapes may be perceived in different ways, as in ambiguous figures, such as the 'duck/rabbit', 'candlesticks/vase', or in the interpretation of a geometrical figure's spatial orientation like the triangle Wittgenstein discusses in the section on 'seeing-as' in *Philosophical Investigations*, (1953), Section IIxi. Trans G.E.M., Anscombe, London: Blackwell.



to make something but not know quite how it will turn out. Where does the intention come from, or the 'intuition,' to make something out of something? By these combined methods I hope to contribute to a fuller understanding of children's visual practice and contemporary practice in Fine Art.

### *Context of the Investigation*

In 1981 I started a Masters in Art Education at Birmingham Polytechnic in order to acquire the tools with which to understand what I saw my daughters doing with materials they were either given or found for themselves. I was struck by the things they did, which were surprising and inventive, especially with material they found and used in a variety of ways that did not fit into the conventional or developmental frameworks that I had studied. Indeed I could not find any study from art history or psychology which included it. The major historical and contemporary texts on children's drawing (Luquet, Piaget & Inhelder, Sully, Lowenfeld, Arnheim, Goodnow, Goodenough, Cox, Freeman, Costall, Golomb, and Fineberg) refer predominantly to drawings that are representational, using conventional materials, often pen or pencil on paper. I observed my daughters manipulating and changing materials in ways that were both representational and abstract, using a very wide variety of media and methods. These observations were brought together in the dissertation written in part fulfillment of the Masters in 1989.

The dissertation, entitled *An Enquiry into Process and Representation in the Visual Works of Young Children*, took as its basis the model of process proposed by G.H.Luquet, in *Le Dessin Enfantin*, and interpreted by Freeman.<sup>i</sup> At that time it was necessary for me to translate *Le Dessin Enfantin* myself, and it was on the basis of those translations, and my observations of my own children, that the Masters thesis was written.<sup>ii</sup> It was not until 2001 that this work, (and only this one by Luquet), was translated into English by Alan Costall then Professor of Psychology at the University of Portsmouth.<sup>iii</sup>

This enquiry investigates in much greater depth the philosophical basis of Luquet's writings. It seeks to establish a philosophical framework within the broader context of phenomenology with which to address the questions raised by an examination of theories of process, as they relate to both the child and the adult artist. In this respect it expands as well as explores in greater depth the material used in the Masters dissertation. It includes further investigation and acquisition of fresh material by children through a project conducted with Creative Partnerships in two Derby primary schools, as well as the examination of perception and process in my own work as evidence of contemporary fine art practice. Whilst artists have been influenced

sometimes very directly by the 'products' of children (see below) my purpose is to examine what influence if any there has been in terms of 'process', and to experiment with this in my own practice.

### *Historical Context*

The thesis takes as its historical framework the period from the mid-nineteenth century up to the present, a time in which studies of childhood have proliferated since the concept was first advanced (Rousseau 'Emile', 1765) that the child should develop and be educated separately from the world of work. The initial period from the mid-nineteenth to the early 20th Century was one in which radical and revolutionary movements in politics, economics and science directly affected the experience, perception and study of children who became a subject to be studied in a way they had not been before. Connections and debates between the fields of Archaeology, Anthropology, Aesthetics and Fine Art practice are evident in the exchange of ideas that occurred throughout the period from the 1880s through to the 1930s. Vlaminck (1906), Derain (1906), Matisse (1906), Picasso (1906-7), Gertrude Stein (1906-7), Apollinaire (1909), Roger Fry (1910), Franz Marc (1911), August Macke (1912) Nolde (1912), Malevich (1915), Tristan Tzara (1917), T.S. Eliot (1919), and Guillaume (1919) all wrote about primitive art (*Primitivism and Twentieth Century Art*, Flam and Deutsch 2003). Luquet published writings on primitive art (*L'Art Neo-Caledonian*, 1926, *L'Art Primitif* 1930) and children's drawing (*Les Dessins d'un Enfant*, Alcan, 1913, and *Le Dessin Enfantin* 1927) as well as psychology (*Idees Generales de Psychologie*, 1909) and philosophy (*Essai d'une Logique Systematiques et Simplifiee*, Alcan 1913). Bataille's review of Luquet's book (*L'Art Primitif*) in 'Documents II, no. 7' (1930) was to influence the work of Giacometti and the Surrealists. These questions and debates went beyond issues of aesthetics to the role and purpose of art itself, and the extent to which it could reflect the truth of the nature of being.

In 1888 Bergson attacked the 'objectivizing and spatializing tendency of psychological concepts' in 'Les donnees immediates de la conscience' (Gadamer *Truth and Method*, 1960). In 1896 it was followed by *Matière et Memoire* his analysis of perception and memory and the relation of body and mind. Felix Alcan the publisher of both the essay 'Le Rire' (1901), and his third major work *L'Evolution Creatrice*, (1907) also first published Georges-Henri Luquet whose first book *Les Dessins d'un Enfant* was published in 1913. Luquet is known to have been a student of Bergson, and the thesis examines the extent to which Luquet's approach to the study of his daughter's drawings was influenced by Bergson's ideas. By the time *Le Dessin Enfantin* was published in 1927 children's drawings were already being collected. Luquet however

was significant in his insistence that such drawings almost invariably taken out of the context of the child's life were less than useful:

One resorts to experimentation when observation does not yield the facts necessary for the study, that is, when the subject, placed in normal conditions, does not act in the way we would wish.<sup>iv</sup>

Luquet is best remembered for his use of the term 'Intellectual Realism' to describe the way in which 'children draw what they know, not what they see'. He challenged the view held by the majority of studies up to that point (and afterwards) that this stage of children's development was one in which they made gross mistakes, or their drawings were aberrant (Sully, 1895). Luquet emphasized instead that children in doing so are primarily concerned with realism, and furthermore, with the 'essential'. In addition, most importantly, he considered their use of types of pictorial construction other than perspective, legitimate and appropriate.

He challenged the assumption that to represent the world in perspective is both 'normal' and 'natural' and that the child's inability to draw in perspective signified a different and by implication deficient, aberrant, or even 'corrupted' kind of vision.

Reviewing the theories that have long dominated the field, I have found that, over the past century, children's drawings have been studied largely from a Western cultural viewpoint. While the discipline of developmental psychology has moved towards situating the study of childhood within a broader network of socio-cultural relations (Cole, 1996; Le Vine, Dixon & Richman, 1994; Rogoff, 2000; Saxe 1991; Vygotsky 1962, 1971, 1978; Wertsch 1985, 1991; Whiting & Edwards 1998) the study of child art has lagged somewhat behind because of its nearly exclusive focus on the conception of a linear development that starts from a primitive, naive, and object-centred depiction and eventually reaches the verisimilitude of optical realism.<sup>v</sup>

Yet whilst Golomb challenges cultural monism and includes children's three-dimensional representations and the work of gifted and exceptional children as evidence against stage theory, she does not include any work which is entirely abstract, or uses found material of any kind, neither does she enter into any discussion of different kinds of process or engage in the close study of the activity in relation to the life of the child that we find in Luquet's analysis.

On the other hand, in Fineberg's study (*The Innocent Eye, Children's Art and the Modern Artist* 1997),<sup>vi</sup> the approach of Russian and European artists between the 1890s and the 1970s to children's art reveals more of an emphasis on the end product, than an engagement with the processes by which the work came about. Klee referred directly to his own childhood drawings, and Picasso closely observed his children's ways of

working. Larionov, Kandinsky, Munters, Miro, Dubuffet, and the Cobra Group reveal an often surprisingly transparent imitation of actual drawings or paintings by children whose work they had collected. Certain artists however, Mirö however, was exceptional in the way he engaged in experimentation with processes that derived from his observations of Paolo Picasso as a child, making direct reference to Luquet (Green 2005).

### *Methodology*

Husserl would have us see that conceiving science more broadly means conceiving evidence more broadly. Evidence is what is or what can be given to consciousness.

What is or can be given to consciousness is the meaningful.<sup>vii</sup>

The thesis draws on ideas from Psychology stemming from Bergson and Luquet, and from Phenomenology through Heidegger, Gadamer, Merleau-Ponty and Ricouer that inform an understanding of the way transformation happens. Essentially my intention is to investigate how things are seen in such a way that they start something, trigger an idea, stimulate action, invite play and then how things proceed from there. The study will consider different ways in which children proceed, the part material plays in the proceedings and how this relates to idea, intention and interpretation. The collection of examples of work from my daughters' early years includes a substantial number which remain undocumented or analyzed and these provide additional information. These will supplement a large collection already documented and test the model and taxonomy of process already constructed in the MA dissertation.

The study of children's drawing within psychology remains largely dependent on an empiricist methodology that maintains the attitude of naturalism, and takes evidence as valid only if it is based on measurable sense experience. The methods used by psychology continue to be dominated by studies involving task-completion exercises, and quantitative research, with very few longitudinal studies, based on drawings resulting from requests put to groups of children in situations that are distinct from their normal everyday life. Furthermore, even now, it is hampered by presuppositions in the developmental model of maturation applied to the child in their capacity to represent the world, which tend to be based on assumptions about the objects of representation, and the forms that those representations can or should take. The mimetic model of representation remains dominant as the paradigm for a mature form of representation.

Working processes that have developed in fine art since the 1900s (collage, the inclusion of found objects, automatism, performance art) are not included in the methodologies used by psychology in the study of how children develop a visual language: drawing remains the dominant means by which children's visual abilities are

tested. However even before psychology turns to the nature and purpose of forms of expression and representation, fundamental issues arise in how the acquisition of knowledge, or 'cognition', is acquired, or alternatively is inbuilt in the child.

Contemporary perceptual theory in relation to development is still divided according to Gibson into either theories of 'enrichment', or 'differentiation'.<sup>viii</sup> Under 'enrichment' fall the cognitively-oriented theories based on Piaget and Vernon which involve the construction of schema, or those that depend upon inference, based on Brunswick and Gregory, (present-day 'rationalism'). Under 'differentiation' are those which depend upon inbuilt structures in the mind (Gestalt, Chomsky), and those Gibson terms 'functional, which include her work with her husband in the 1950s up until the present, which she terms the 'ecological' approach. The most important difference that she accentuates here between their (the Gibsons') work and others', is their emphasis on the link between perception and action. 'Except for Piaget' she writes 'construction theories do not hypothesize a role for action in perceptual development' (she makes no reference to Luquet). The ecological approach, on the other hand, emphasizes the fundamental reciprocity of perception and action'<sup>ix</sup> However in the book the authors make no reference to Bergson, Luquet, Merleau-Ponty and the work of Phenomenology, even though Varela, Thompson & Rosch had published *The Embodied Mind* in 1991<sup>x</sup> and make direct reference to the work of Phenomenology, to Merleau-Ponty, and Husserl. There is no acknowledgement of the 'intentional bond' as recognised by Varela, Thompson and Rosch. The term Gibson and Pick use to describe the interdependence between the world and a subject is 'affordance' (what the intuited object/space/material offers in terms of its possible uses).

Meaning begins, we suggest, with the discovery of what is afforded by some object or event for oneself. What is discovered is intrinsically functional and abstract as in any relation.<sup>xi</sup>

The relation of the person to objects in terms of 'abstractions' and 'functions' only, could be seen as severely impoverished unless the authors mean 'functioning meaningfully', but this is not made evident in the text. In their view, it is through these interactions that the infant comes to realize similarity and difference, liquidity, and solidity, but this is not connected to affect, to interrelations with others, or to meaning. The importance of the phenomenological method is that it returns us to the question of what is consciousness, and how it is given, not only through that *of which* we are conscious, but *the way in which* we are conscious of it.

The methodology employed in the investigation is therefore essentially a descriptive method, which includes empirical evidence that is neither test-based nor quantitative, but

situated in the daily home environment and life of the child. The evidence is acquired through the close observation of the way in which materials are found and put together by the children, what they say (spontaneously) about the things they make, written records and photographic evidence. It is critically important that the work is made spontaneously by the child, without request, guidance, or intervention.

This is then interrogated through research into the nature of intuition, which Husserl identified as the key to the validity of the findings of phenomenology, combined with investigation into and reflection on key texts and papers, as well as attending contemporary exhibitions, and seminars in fine art and philosophy, and the exploration of related ideas through my own practice.

A project devised by me with the support and funding of Creative Partnerships in Derby has provided additional information from a very different environment but with a common aim. It provides the means to observe how and if situations can be structured in the school environment to enable creative play using found or ready-made materials. The collaboration with Creative Partnerships provided the opportunity for observation, and interviews in which children, artists, facilitators and teachers provided information and discussed methods and results.

In my own practice I have always sought to maintain a balance between what I term the 'founding' perception, the process, and the roles of spontaneity, intuition and memory. I have always maintained as an abiding principle the inclusion of spontaneity, unpredictability, and chance operations as a key factor in my working process, in the belief that it is only through this that the work gains a life of its own. The thesis examines this in greater depth, formalising and clarifying these elements in my working process, as well as those of the child, and experimenting with incorporating some of the processes I observed the children use. I have not for example previously used found material or objects in my own work to the extent that they did, and this is the area of particular significance which distinguishes this study of children's work from that of others.

### *Structure of Thesis*

*Chapter 1* lays out a territory that will be examined from a number of viewpoints through later chapters. My aim is to construct an initial model of the 'process' as described by Luquet, which will be critically evaluated, added to and modified in the later chapters of the thesis through the presentation and evaluation of examples of children's drawings and artefacts. These will provide evidence of a broader range of strategies, as well as types and objects of representation than those identified by Luquet. My purpose is both to clarify and I hope to increase awareness of certain aspects of his work, and its value for the study of the creative process in the child, and through identifying its limitations in relation to twentieth century and contemporary practice, seek to modify it in such a way that it is better fit for purpose.

*Chapter Two* is composed of two parts. The first part examines some key developments in approaches to the process of making art over the last century in order to establish the context for an expansion of Luquet's model. The second part presents a series of examples and case studies of children's work, that are interpreted and analyzed in relation to the model of process, and theories of intuition and perception introduced in Chapter 1.

*Chapter Three* is composed of a series of reflections on my own practice, through an examination of types of intuition, which form the basis or starting point for processes of making to begin.

*Chapter Four* considers ways in which, through the contribution of Phenomenology, it may be possible to understand certain forms of intuition and their relation to process. The concepts of 'intuition', 'circumspection', 'operative intentionality', and 'embodiment', will be examined with reference to Husserl, Heidegger's 'The Origin of the Work of Art', Ricoeur, Gadamer, and Merleau-Ponty's 'practical cogito'.

The *Conclusion* presents the findings of the enquiry, the key insights that research into Phenomenology has brought to it, and those aspects I consider to be original in the work I have completed. Finally I shall give my views on those aspects of the enquiry that require further research, or point to possible directions for the future.

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- <sup>i</sup> Freeman N., (1972) 'Process and Product in Children's Drawing', *Perception* Vol.1
- <sup>ii</sup> West V., (1989) *An Enquiry into Process and Representation in the Visual Works of Young Children*, a dissertation in part fulfilment of M.A. in Art Education, Birmingham Polytechnic
- <sup>iii</sup> Luquet, G-H., (2001) *Children's Drawing* ('*Le Dessin Enfantin*') Costall (trans.) London: Free Association Books.
- <sup>iv</sup> Luquet, G-H., (2002) *Children's Drawing* p.218.
- <sup>v</sup> Golomb C., (2002) *'Child Art in Context'*, Washington: American Psychological Association.
- <sup>vi</sup> Fineberg J., (1997) *The Innocent Eye, Children's Art and the Modern Artist* UK and New Jersey U.S.A: Princeton University Press.
- <sup>vii</sup> Cohen R.A., (1995) 'Foreward to the Second Edition' of Emmanuel Levinas *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology* trans. André Orianne, Illinois U.S.A.: Northwestern University Press.
- <sup>viii</sup> Gibson E., and Pick A.D., (2000) *An Ecological approach to Perceptual Learning and Development*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. pp.7-13.
- <sup>ix</sup> Gibson E., and Pick A.D., (2000) *An Ecological approach to Perceptual Learning and Development*. p.12.
- <sup>x</sup> Varela, Thompson & Rosch *The Embodied Mind* U.S.A: MIT Cambridge, Mass 1991.
- <sup>xi</sup> Gibson E., and Pick A.D., (2000) *An Ecological approach to Perceptual Learning and Development* p.187. The dominant purpose comes across as a dominantly functional and material one:

What is discovered is intrinsically functional and abstract, as in any relation. Repeated experiences of an event with a comparable functional relation to oneself and a comparable outcome, over varying details of context, would serve to enhance the abstractness of the meaning. For example babies frequently experience the pouring of liquid into a container, consequent splashing, a feeling of wetness when it is tasted and swallowed or felt with a finger; on another occasion ...the pouring of bath water from a cup as the baby is allowed to play in the bath, scooping up water, hearing it splash, feeling the wetness. These events provide a basis for forming concepts of liquidity, of pouring, of containers, and more.<sup>xi</sup>

In January 2012 I wrote the following in my journal:

observed Alfie (14 months old) at the sink, trying to hold, catch, the water in a stream, which came from the tap (central, high, arched and movable) which I turned on in such a way that it varied between a strong force, a medium, or a fine constant stream, or a fine but broken stream, to become a dripping tap oscillating with a stream. The stream he would attempt to hold, and would hold his hand there, his fingers around the stream, attempting to enclose it - it appears like an object, it has solidity, it has edges, it appears still, yet it has no substance and it moves, it can't be taken hold of, it disappears when you try to hold it, but it can be caught, contained, poured away, stirred, things float in it, it makes a variety of noises, it can be hot, warm and cold.

The aspect of his play that was the most fascinating for me was his attempt to grasp (both literally and metaphorically) the stream/line/tube of water, and its mysterious quality of appearing solid yet being ungraspable. He spent at least as much if not more time engaged in this impossible task, as he did in those he was able to perform fairly rapidly, like pouring and stirring (which could be described as 'functional'). It was the nature of water *in itself* that fascinated him. It demonstrates a need to test out the nature of appearance, to discover what the nature of a substance is, where it is, of what it consists, and how it can be met with, or grasped, or not grasped yet through not grasping gain a better sense of it. The range of what is included in descriptions of this kind of exploration is what defines the difference between the concept of intentionality, or what Varela means by 'enaction', and what Gibson and Pick mean by the term 'affordance'. In 'intentionality' and in Varela's use of the term 'enaction' there is implicit in the term a reciprocity that goes beyond the functional, to a fundamental relation of inseparability and interdependence between oneself and the world.



## CHAPTER 1: *LUQUET, PERCEPTION & PROCESS*

## GEORGES-HENRI LUQUET

Georges-Henri Luquet was born in 1876, seventeen years later than Henri Bergson. Bergson's influence was at its height at the time Luquet had his dissertation *Les Dessins d'un Enfant* published by Felix Alcan in 1913, the same publisher as Bergson's *L'Evolution Créatrice* in 1907. Having studied not only with Bergson but also Levy-Bruhl, and having become 'the youngest professor of philosophy in France' <sup>1</sup> his research was in four main areas, all of which were closely interlinked: logic and epistemology, primitive art and ethnology, children's drawing, and history. Mobilised during the war, he settled in Paris afterwards working at Lycée St.Louis, and then Lycée Rollin, publishing a continuation of his work on children's drawing 'Le Dessin Enfantin' in 1927. On his return to Paris he became a member of the Société de Psychologie, which was founded in 1900 under the 'auspices' of Pierre Janet.

Bergson and J.M. Baldwin were on the Patronage Committee of the Société, and on the International Organization Council were many other eminent scientists and philosophers, including William James. Felix Alcan, (the editor and publisher of Bergson and Luquet, who published the Society's 'Journal de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique'), was the treasurer. Luquet himself became President of the Society between 1930 - 1934.<sup>1</sup> What is striking about the nature of the Society, as it is described by Parot, is the extraordinary range of disciplines that were represented.

Between World War I and World War II, psychology adopted a direction open to other human sciences; I. Meyerson was the main organizer of this choice. Leading the Société de Psychologie and the *Journal de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique*, he tried to construct an individual and collective psychology that reflected not only the scientific preoccupations of his masters and friends but also their political choices: They had been the founders of the Human Rights League at the end of the 19th century. Behind Durkheim and Seignobos, with Mauss, Levy-Bruhl, and Blondel, Meyerson answered the new historians' call for a unified science of mentalities, a historical psychology of collective representations. Meyerson offered to sociologists, anthropologists, linguists, and historians several forums to debate in which psychology was the unifying science. But at the end of World War II, his psychology

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<sup>1</sup> 'From this first issue, Meyerson gave a new outlook to the society and the *Journal*, one that was more consistent with the broadening then prevailing in the human sciences and with the need to cross disciplinary boundaries. At Meyerson's urging, the presidency of the society was taken on successively by representatives of various sciences: Chaslin, a psychiatrist and biologist, was president after WWI; Étienne Rabaud, a biologist, succeeded him; and then came the philosopher Henri Délaacroix. Charles Lalo was treasurer. Wallon was president in 1927, Paul Rivet in 1928. They were followed by Abel Rey, a member of the editorial committee of *Mouvement Socialiste* (*Socialist Movement*), and in 1930 by Georges-Henri Luquet. In 1934, Lalo became president, and Jean-Maurice Lahy succeeded him. All of them were friends, or at least acquaintances, of Meyerson; the variety of their scientific preoccupations testified to Meyerson's will to open psychology' (Francoise Parot, Université Paris V, 'Psychology in the Human Sciences in France, 1920c - 1940: Ignace Meyerson's Historical Psychology', *History of Psychology* 2000, Vol.3.No.2, 104 - 121

was marginalized, and a positivistic and behavioristic way was preferred. Meyerson's historical psychology disappeared from academic psychology, but historians have preserved its legacy.<sup>ii</sup>

There was also a radical political aspect to the Society: it was closely linked to the Human Rights League, to democracy and equality, and many of the members, many of whom were Jewish themselves, had been supporters of Dreyfus in the 1890s (Parot, 2000). Ignace Meyerson, a Polish immigrant, was the nephew of Émile Meyerson from Lublin Poland, who studied Chemistry under Robert Wilhelm Bunsen, and came to Paris in 1882, later to become an eminent philosopher of science, revered by both Bergson and Einstein.<sup>2</sup> His nephew's commitment to a holistic approach to the study of the mind included also the importance of recognition of the culture and history of the subject's world, within and beyond their own lifetime:

The object of our choice is the history of the development of the mind: When it is examined within children, or throughout the changing of institutions, we are doing history. (I. Meyerson, 1924).

However there was more to Meyerson: he was also 'extrêmement captivé par le domaine de l'art'<sup>iii</sup> and in his paper 'Lev, Ignace, Jerome et les autres ....vers une perspective constructiviste en psychologie interactionniste', Christian Brassac picks up Meyerson's use of the term 'oeuvres', 'le maître mot de la pensée meyersonnienne'.<sup>iv</sup> Whilst it also refers to works of literature and music, he meant it to signify all human works, and fundamentally the work of creating a world, physical and social, that has as its basis reciprocity and interaction.

### *Luquet's Methodology*

Possibly one of the most important distinguishing features of Luquet's work is his emphasis and his observations on the nature of the way the drawings he studied came about. In this respect alone, Luquet's work is virtually unique in the precision and the breadth of his observations, which were only possible because he lived with his principal subject, his daughter Simonne. Referring back to the range of his research at the time, he brought to his observations the awareness of the anthropologist, going beyond the confines of the act of drawing itself to the circumstances and conditions both socially and environmentally in which it was situated, and which entered into the process in ways he was clearly able to identify. Because of this he was able to construct a dynamic model of the child's interaction

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<sup>2</sup> He wrote *Identité et Réalité* 1908, (also published by Felix Alcan): Bergson entitled him a 'profound philosopher' in 1909, and Einstein published an article about him in 1928 expressing admiration and approval for his thinking on the psychology of relativity physics. Meyerson introduced a distinction between 'identification' and 'identities'. We hope for full explanations (identification) of reality, but achieve only partial explanations (identities). He agreed with Kant that reality is unknowable or noumenal. The thing-in-itself cannot be known since the ways of reason transform diversity into identity.

with the world through a detailed analysis of how she engages with various ways of going about making a drawing.

He observes with a great deal of detail and interest that the child does not confine herself to one method, but may use a series of different starting points and strategies at different stages as she child grows older, but also very importantly, *at the same time, according to her choice*. He describes in other words not a singular method, but a variety of methods or strategies that the child draws on in a number of different ways, and which may proceed differently. These will then continue through a series of drawings over substantial periods of time, or may cease, yet they may also be returned to later. Because, in other words it is a longitudinal study, he is able to observe the fact that the child will return to a theme or subject, or process. He is able to identify such important characteristics as the '*conservation of type*', and the kinds of subjects that children become fascinated by: not only the way that they go about drawing a subject, but the kinds of subject children choose to draw. It is because he is interested in *her* choices that he is able to discover her and later, other children's often obsessive fascination with one kind of thing rather than another. This he writes about as the child's '*predilection*' for particular subjects, as well as the obsessive repetition of '*automatism*'. All of these aspects, which could be seen as extraneous and of minor relevance to others, and which are excluded by empirical task-completion methodologies,<sup>3</sup> can only be observed if two conditions are fulfilled: the child is left alone to make her own choices and determine the entire process, from the moment the impetus to make something occurs, through to its development or its cessation; and the observer is prepared to observe over a long period of time *maintaining a high level of discretion and non-interference*. By this means Luquet reveals the way in which the spontaneous desire to make something arises out of the fabric of her life, and the activities and social structures that make it up. This is why it is so important to emphasize his approach as one that examines 'process', and not simply an accumulation of singular examples, or 'products'. One of the drawings by his daughter Simonne at the age of 5 years and 9 months illustrates this particularly well (see Fig.6, Fig.79 in 'Le Dessin Enfantin'). It is an example of a way of depicting objects in space that is common during the stage of 'Intellectual Realism': 'rabattement', which lays them out in the form of a map, or as if they are folded out in such a

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<sup>3</sup> John Matthews, an artist and teacher, has conducted longitudinal studies and experimental work over 25 years in London and Singapore, and these form the basis of his writing on children's drawing. They provide a wealth of evidence on the inter-relation between different forms of interaction and expression: 'Many accounts of the development of children's drawing seem to assume that some of the children's actions..... are simply irrelevant to drawing proper...all such actions are usually considered 'over-inclusive' actions, extraneous to the drawing act proper' John Matthews *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning*. London: Falmer Press 1999. 98

way that all the features can be seen distinctly.<sup>4</sup> All sorts of things are happening simultaneously in the drawing, (which may not have been the case in real life), but they were all things that she knew happened at some time in the 'Morning', which was the title she gave it.

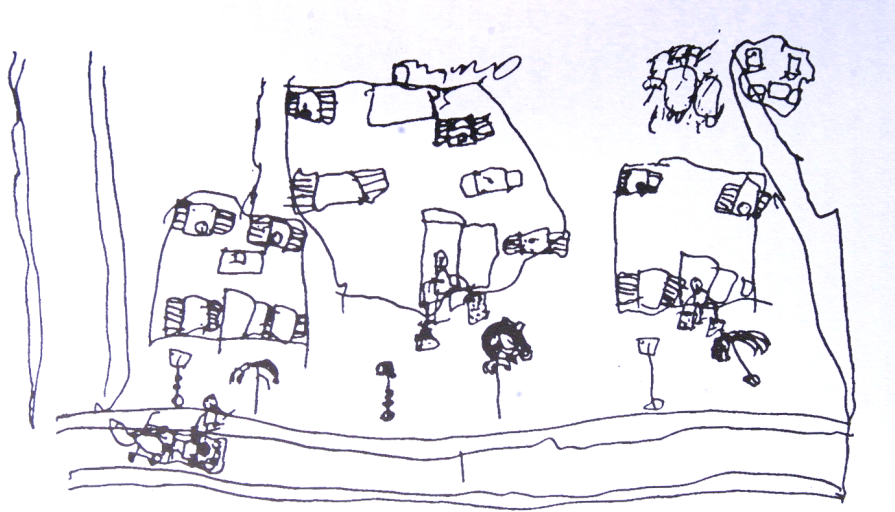


Figure 1 (Fig 79 - Costall trans). Simonne Luquet, French, 5.9 'Morning'

It is a veritable '*tableau*', and the young girl when explaining the finished drawing gave it the title 'the morning'. It faithfully reproduces what she could see every morning outside her door. Along the road she has shown the pavement with its trees and gas lamps, and three houses. At the upper windows of each of the houses the maids are looking out into the road. The doors of the house are open (indeed, opened outwards), and in front of the two on the right, the maids are cleaning the carpets by hitting them against the trees. The maid of the house on the left is beside the pavement, where she has gone to fetch the milk. In front of her, in the road, there is the milk cart and in the cart jugs of milk. In the top right-hand corner there is the house of the milkman and to its left a field with two cows and a chicken.<sup>v</sup>

Luquet was significant in his insistence that drawings taken out of the context of the child's life were less than useful, and this drawing in particular illustrates that context as do so many of the drawings he refers to. He was particularly opposed to experimental methodology:

One resorts to experimentation when observation does not yield the facts necessary for the study, that is, when the subject, placed in normal conditions, does not act in the way we

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<sup>4</sup> Rabattement, Transparency and mixed viewpoints are all ways of depicting objects in space which will be examined in more detail later in this chapter.

would wish. Consequently, the conditions under which the subject is then placed by the experimenter are abnormal, at least for that subject. The subject is thereby deformed by experimentation, so that when observed on a later occasion one cannot be sure that the results we obtain from him would conform to those which we would have found if he had not been subjected to experiment earlier.<sup>vi</sup>

It is interesting that Luquet went so far as to say that the subject is *deformed* by experimentation. Luquet is stating in very strong terms indeed, not only that the information obtained is fundamentally distorted, and is not of the sort that 'we would wish', but that what the child does, or how they go about it may be irrevocably altered as a consequence. He seems to be implying here that not only is there necessarily an element of coercion in such experiments, which depend on the authority of the adult to make such a demand, but further, the child will be affected by this kind of intervention in such a way that the drawings they make at a later date may not 'conform to those which we would have found *if he had not been subjected to experiment earlier*'. In other words that experiments of this kind may irrevocably *alter* the nature of the way children make drawings.

Yet as Costall points out in the Introduction to his translation of 'Le Dessin Enfantin' (2001) previous to his quotation of this same passage, this remains the 'favoured method in modern psychology' (viii). One of the projects that is part of continuing research at the Max Planck Institute into 'Knowledge in the Making: Drawing and Writing as Research Techniques', is the work by Barbara Wittmann: 'Meaningful Scribbles. Children's Drawings as Psychological Instruments, 1880-1950'. In this she is studying the development of the use of drawing by Psychology from 1900 and the techniques it developed as diagnostic tools in the investigation of the child's 'sensomotoric functions and perceptions of space, to give proof of children's intelligence and social development, and to document their psychoanalytic dispositions and symptoms'.<sup>5</sup>

In the synopsis of the study, from which the footnote below is taken, Wittmann implicitly includes Luquet in the list of those who used drawings as 'diagnostic devices'. In this she is mistaken. *Luquet never uses the drawings as diagnostic devices to rate cognition, or psychological well-being or evidence of pathology*. He studies them as evidence of the

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<sup>5</sup> 'Whereas before 1880, children's drawings were seen as mere scribbles, and not considered to be of any aesthetic or heuristic value, psychologists such as James Mark Baldwin, James Sully, William Stern, Ernst Meumann, David Katz, George-Henri Luquet, Karl Bühler, Florence Goodenough, Sophie Morgenstern and Jean Piaget soon after came to consider drawings to be a major diagnostic device in the investigation of children. Like children's play and their stories, the "artistic production" was (and still is) believed to reveal sensomotoric functions and perceptions of space, to give proof of children's intelligence and social development, and to document their psychoanalytic dispositions and symptoms'. Barbara Wittman 'Meaningful Scribbles. Children's Drawings as Psychological Instruments, 1880-1950'. Max Planck Institute. Jan.2010.

child's way of thinking about, understanding, playing with and representing the world around her and he studies the way that it changes as she grows up. He does not use the drawings as a means of measuring the child in any way, but as a means of establishing the kinds of strategies and means by which the child goes about the process of making a drawing, and the way it changes as she (and other children included in *Le Dessin Enfantin*) grow older. Even in *Le Dessin Enfantin* which presents a wide range of evidence from children of different nationalities, there is never any attempt at a classification in terms of levels of achievement, standards of 'excellence', 'normality' 'pathology', 'neurosis', 'intelligence', or 'development'. Luquet's method was not a hypothetical deductive method, with the child's drawings used to test it, nor did he place her in an artificial environment in which to conduct it.

Luquet's method is better described as based on a 'grounded theory' in which he used the evidence to guide him to an adequate organisation of it. There is both a fundamental respect for the other (the child) continually evident in his observations, and there is an assiduous methodology committed to the gathering of objective information about the entire process and its relation to the life of the other. In this respect his findings are not only more ethical, but also much more accurate and full in the information they provide. It is perhaps because he does not make judgements of that kind, and the information is of a type that cannot be used for classification as it is not posited in terms of levels of achievement, that his work remained un-translated for so long. Luquet's objective was to study the nature of the mind in the process of its formation when as he put it 'the mental mechanisms of children need to be adapted to the preservation of their lives throughout childhood and into adulthood.'<sup>vii</sup> Later in the next paragraph he reinforces his point: 'Through the seriousness with which they go about drawing, and the faculties it involves, children forge, as it were, their own mental structure.' Any interference or demand placed on the child would necessarily distort the findings. Even Sully so very long ago in his Introduction states: 'It is in the spontaneous utterances of children.....that we can best watch the play of the instinctive tendencies of thought' and later:

'A child is very quick in spying whether he is being observed and as soon as he suspects that you are specially interested in his talk he is apt to produce an effect. This wish to say something startling, wonderful or what not, will, it is obvious, detract from the value of the utterance'.<sup>viii</sup>

## *Summary*

To sum up so far therefore, I have outlined the nature of the intellectual milieu in which Luquet was an active participant between the first and second World Wars and the importance of Ignace Meyerson's commitment to inter-disciplinary exchange in the Société de Psychologie. I have emphasized the importance of Luquet's methodology, more akin to anthropology or 'grounded theory', and to the 'historical psychology of collective representations' so encouraged by Meyerson that was superseded after World War 2 by a psychology dominated by positivism and behaviourism. His methodology was essential to his main purpose, which was to study the nature of the mind and its development without influencing it unduly, and the anthropologist in him included the larger context of the social and familial as essential to the process in which the acts of drawing occurred. He observed what stimulated or influenced the child to draw, how she then proceeded and if and how she concluded it and then might return to it. His interest and observations extended far beyond the singular artefact or act, to a unified yet complex series of acts which are inseparable from the life and thought of the child. This 'process' is not of a simple or singular type. It is important therefore to go back to the beginning and spend some time on the 'elements' that Luquet identified and considered essential to it. Before that it is necessary to point out some differences between the *types* of process that can be identified in Luquet's writing.

In *Le Dessin Enfantin* Luquet does not lay out the territory so to speak beforehand, but dives straight in with 'The Elements of Children's Drawings' in Part 1, and 'The Development of Children's Drawings' (through the three main stages of Fortuitous, Failed and Intellectual Realism) in Chapter 2, beginning with an elucidation of what he means by realism. It is in the 'Conclusions' and particularly the 'Conclusions Psychologique' that a fuller articulation and explanation can be found of some of the elements contained in his first chapter. I therefore want to set out as clearly as I can my understanding of his approach to his subject bearing in mind that I am interested in establishing what I perceive of particular relevance to 'process'.



### ***Luquet and Process***

Luquet situates the process of drawing engaged in by the child within a larger 'process' that he sees as being one that has developed through evolution, as a means of learning how to be in the world. It is also important to distinguish between the entire process engaged in by the child, and the making *process* itself. However these must not be seen as separate entities.

Perhaps the best way to describe what I mean is that in what is distinguished by 'the process of making' which is the main subject of this thesis, is a period in which there is a meeting of faculties, of experience and of perception in which all types of process could be said to contribute.

For the purpose of clarity however, I would like to propose that there are *three* types of process that can be identified in Luquet.

1. At the core so to speak, is the practical '*process of making*' (the making of the work) which may use a variety of *methods* or *strategies* and a variety of materials. I am using these terms to make an important distinction. A *method* is not the same as a *strategy*, in that a method is more often determined by the materials: for example, when using paint it has to be applied in certain ways, with a range of consistencies which may depend upon the nature of the paper or type of surface and its orientation (horizontal, at an angle, vertical); it can be mixed with a brush; it can be applied with the hands etc. A *strategy* is the way in which the artist goes about using a method, and the sequence of decisions and types of decision that are made during the making process. It may involve a radical change of method, or subject, it may involve the co-operation of another, or it may be the decision to use a particular form of depiction. For example Luquet's description of the decision a child makes to use visual realism rather than intellectual realism to make a drawing for their teacher ('duplicité de types') can be called a *strategy* because they think they will prefer that type of representation (once the child has acquired the drawing conventions necessary to visual realism and is therefore able to make that choice).

2. The '*formative process*' in which the '*process of making*' is an essential component:

Luquet states in his 'Conclusions Psychologique et Pédagogique' how the child's engagement with drawing 'forges his or her mental structure'.<sup>ix</sup> Luquet goes so far as to say that this engagement contributes significantly to the making of the person, and *includes the conditions in which the making process occurs*. By this I mean the culture, external environment, and the family structures and domestic environment of the child.

3. The '*evolutionary process*' of the species, which it could be claimed is 'embedded' in the maturation process of the child: Luquet puts the case that the way in which the child goes about making a drawing, particularly during the stages of 'fortuitous' and 'intellectual

realism', makes evolutionary sense in their 'acute and spontaneous attention to things'; their concern is primarily with 'the totality and with the general, and only later with details and what is individual'.<sup>x</sup> The ability to have a sense of what is general, and which commonly recurs, he claims, is necessary to human survival in order to be able to act effectively and rapidly.

It will be through an examination of what is involved in 'the process of making' *and* its inseparability from the 'formative process', that I shall hope to reveal both how much Luquet's work informs us, and also where it requires revision and addition, particularly in the light of developments in fine art practice since the early 20th Century.

### ***The Process of Making***

As I stated in the Introduction, I shall be concentrating in the thesis on what initially starts the process off, and then what happens during the time that the child, or artist is engaged in the process, and then how or if it is then concluded. During this chapter, when I use the term 'process' I am referring to the *process of making*. However it is important to emphasize the interrelation and inseparability of the process of making from the life of the child, in other words from the *formative* process: indeed it is one of the main aims of this thesis to draw attention to this, and provide evidence of it, albeit with very different types of evidence.

Luquet observed that the child enters into a process that will take a certain amount of time and is therefore composed of a series of moments and periods. There are moments or periods of activity, and also moments and periods of perception and reflection, within which thoughts and feelings, memories and knowledge all enter in different ways to contribute to the decisions that are or are not taken. It is the way in which these contributory factors or elements enter, that creates a model of the making process that is layered and non-linear, and which reveal or articulate the larger process and its relation to the child's life. First of all I shall describe how the process appears to occur through time, and then I shall examine certain of the key elements that enter into it. In this way I hope to bring attention to those underlying concepts that will be investigated in greater depth in the following chapters of the thesis.

The process becomes evident in an act or a series of acts. *There is an impulse to act*. For Luquet this is a particular kind of act, which uses a particular method: the use of a pencil to make marks on paper. In the following chapter I shall be examining other definitions of drawing and objects of representation. However I consider the fundamental structure of the

process as Luquet describes it, to be a framework that can be built on through critical analysis and modification.

The impulse to act; in other words that which starts the process off, and the nature of the moment of this impulse, I shall return to later in this chapter and in later chapters. It is perhaps the most important, the most complex and the most difficult of the moments that are to be studied. Whilst it is possible to see a progression in the child's development from what appear to be 'simple' acts or gestures, to a much more elaborate and complex set of possibilities that are acquired over time, it will become evident that what happens at the most fundamental and basic level, when the infant begins to make marks or put things together, is neither simple nor straightforward.

After a period of time of mark-making, according to Luquet, the child recognizes a resemblance in the marks to an external object, which he terms 'fortuitous realism'. This theory of how signification is ascribed to the marks by the child (through resemblance) is seriously questioned by Matthews(1999) and will be returned to in the next chapter.

During the phase when infants are supposed to be mindlessly scribbling, they imbue their mark making actions with profound expressive and representational intention....Virtually all accounts of drawing lump together, under the generic title 'scribbling', a vast range of different types of drawing, and each one worthy of serious consideration. For many children, these drawings are products of a systematic investigation, rather than haphazard actions, of the expressive and representational potential of visual media.<sup>xi</sup>

There is often an interpretation or a narrative that is spoken during the process of mark making in which the child talks to herself or himself about what is happening during the progress of the drawing and how the decisions are being made, and this is one of the important aspects of Luquet's work, that he *listened* to what the child had to say, in a way that was not interfering, and also had conversations about the work which were neither demanding nor instructive. The relation between different forms of expression and play will be examined in Chapter 2, but Luquet's observations on the spoken commentaries, were critical to his realization of the role of interpretation in the process.

Later, the child will have what Luquet terms an 'intention' when the idea to make something *specific* occurs. This proceeds by means of a number of strategies depending on the materials and the age of the child (as described in his chapters on 'fortuitous realism' and 'intellectual realism'). At certain points during this making she may pause and reflect on the work so far, and this may bring about a change of intention, or subject. She may also spontaneously see something in the shapes or marks she has made, in other words she may 'interpret' what she has made in a way that is different to the initial intention, and this can stimulate a change of plan. Interpretation plays a key role throughout the model of process

that Luquet outlines, and will be examined in greater depth later in this chapter. The work may in fact be made *complete* through the act of interpretation, or it may be completed by the addition of further details or marks.

Having completed the drawing or making process, a number of different things can occur, and it is again significant that Luquet paid attention to these differences, and recognized their importance. It is another example of the way in which his methodology resulted in very different and much fuller findings than are possible within the confines of the 'task-completion' methodology of so many studies of children's drawing. He found that often the child would repeat the drawing or process of making over and over again, in an almost mechanical fashion, which caused him to use the term 'automatism'. The fascination with repetition, or with the slightest variables that occur in repetition is a process that became adopted as a strategy by artists in the 20th Century, in a way that had never occurred before, so the fact that this occurs as one of the alternatives of this larger process in the early years of the child, is of particular relevance to this thesis.<sup>6</sup> He also observed that the drawing may be one of a series of related drawings that are continued in a single 'sitting'; or it may be that the child makes a single drawing, which is continued over time and returned to. Because of the nature of his relationship with his subject, his daughter Simonne, he was also able to observe, (again very importantly in terms of the way it informs his understanding of the larger process) that some drawings may be returned to after a considerable time has elapsed, and another similar series started.

Before that it is necessary to lay out as clearly as possible the variations Luquet observed in the making process from its initial stages to its later more complex and varied permutations. It is important to note here that whilst he identified different stages, he did not believe them to be a clearly sequential or developmental series, but rather more like the acquisition of a repertoire of available approaches to making, which could be accessed whenever they were needed. In his 'Conclusions Pedagogiques' (§93)<sup>xii</sup> he points out that the skilled drawings of draughtsmen, cartographers, architects and designers all make use of transparency, 'rabattement' (the plan) and mixed viewpoints (side elevation + plan), and the aim of education should not be to 'hasten advancement to the fourth stage' (visual realism). Similarly with the variations I have outlined below, whilst there is a developmental aspect to them, as they become more complex as the child gets older, there is a movement back and forth between them. In 'The Child's Relations with Others' from *Primacy of Perception* Merleau-Ponty writes:

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<sup>6</sup> One which includes the before and after of making, that is, not confining the notion of process to one dominated by the production of a product, but to the *nature* of the production.

When we examined the child's drawing, one of the faults we found with the famous book by Luquet was precisely this: The child's drawing is considered by Luquet to be an abortive adult drawing, and the development of the child, viewed through the stages of his drawing, appears as a series of frustrations of the attempt to represent the world as the adult does (at least the white, "civilized," Western adult) - that is, according to the laws of classical geometrical perspective. We tried to show, on the contrary, that the child's processes of expression could not be understood as simple breakdowns on the road to "visual realism" and that, instead, these processes testified to the presence in the child of a relation with things and with the sensible very different from the one that is expressed in the perspective projection of drawing in the classic style'.<sup>xiii</sup>

This essay is 'a fragment of a larger lecture course' on phenomenological psychology at the Sorbonne, and as the translator William Cobb notes, 'no other texts on the subject by Merleau-Ponty are available' (97) for what reason he does not say. It is most surprising that he interpreted Luquet in this way. At no point does Luquet describe the child's (inevitably failing) efforts as a simple attempt to imitate the adult. On the contrary, Luquet would have agreed with the second half of this paragraph, although I suspect in a way limited by those aspects with which I myself take issue, and which could not be better articulated than the way Merleau-Ponty has here.

### *Initial Model of Process*

Below is the first diagram that I devised for the Masters thesis based on my reading of Luquet:<sup>xiv</sup>

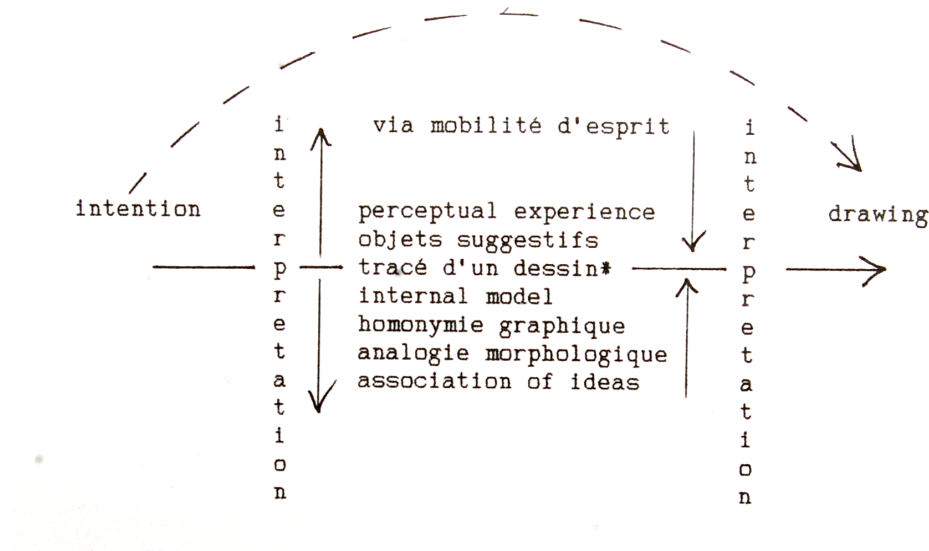


Figure 2

Here the preliminary stage of fortuitous realism is not included: instead I have started with 'intention', rather than from the preliminary acts, or gestures that lead eventually to the recognition that characterizes 'fortuitous realism'. It reveals one of the reasons for my needing to return to the subject. Certain questions, some of which are the most fundamental, I did not realize the full significance and complexity of, and so did not research into sufficiently in that study. Automatism is also not included in this diagram, which should require the arrow to go full circle around and back to 'intention' to start it all over again. There can also be seen an over-arching arrow, which I originally thought signifies the energy or spirit, that moves the process along: *mobilité d'esprit*. In fact, what Luquet is referring to here is the ability of the child's mind to move across categories and make analogies between things: mobility of mind. Costall translates this as 'lability of mind' which seems a strange and limiting translation. The use of the term *mobilité* implies energy and direction, being very much a part if not the basis of the purposive nature of the act, and in this respect my original interpretation has relevance. It also provides the means by which the *imagination* is able to enter into the process, or more accurately may be seen to be another term for it. The significance of *mobilité d'esprit* has grown during the development of the thesis and will be returned to in Chapters 2 and 4.

### ***Routes through the Process***

The following are five variations of 'routes' through the structure or model, which have fundamentally a beginning point, a middle doing section, and a completion, which may be brought about by a naming, by simply ceasing, or by one or several further acts.

1. In the first variation there is no *specific* intention in the sense that the child declares or can articulate a purpose, (this is a stage prior to, and coincidental to the development of language). However, as has been pointed out with reference to Matthews, this does not mean that what the child engages in is not intentional, or purposive. The child engages in a series of acts which involve using instruments or their own body to make marks, and leave traces, often accompanied by sounds, words and gestures.

2. In the second variation something or things are seen 'as' something during or at the end of the process. This 'seeing as' may not need any further additions to complete the process, *other than* the often very pronounced *naming* of the completed work or quite often, through a commentary on the drawing (or work)<sup>7</sup> as it progresses.

3. In the third variation the child may add something to what has been seen 'as' something. In this case there is a '*seeing as almost some thing*', an interpretation that, for the child, needs an addition to become more evidently what it appears to be. Interpretation will be looked at in detail later, but 'is most often determined by the resemblance between the drawing (or object) and an object or objects familiar to the child'.<sup>xv</sup>

4. It is in the fourth variation that *intention* in the sense meant by Luquet, seems to turn up for the first time. This seems to occur only after the child has gone through a period of recognising resemblances in the marks they have made. However (as I shall point out in the following section) it is important that we are careful not to assume there is no intention in the first two variations. At a certain stage the child will declare their intention, or will make a clear indication in one form or another, what it might be. Quite often in this variation, the drawing (or work) may not go as it was intended, and for a number of reasons (not least an inability as yet to control the materials adequately) changes may occur to the initial 'intention': either through the 'happy accident' it is seen as *something else*; or it does not achieve the intention and is turned into something else that satisfies the child better through a recognised resemblance.

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<sup>7</sup> I add 'work' here in brackets, and in the following variations, as well as 'object', in order to point out the extension that is necessary to Luquet's model, which will be articulated in the next chapter.

5. The fifth variation is one where there is an automatic repetition of a process which Luquet named 'Automatisme Graphique'. Luquet gives several examples all by children at the age of about three and a half years old, who after making one drawing repeat the form they have made in a mechanical fashion, over and over again.<sup>8</sup> This can happen in the earliest variation as will be described later, but it also occurs at later stages when a particular way of working with materials may be repeated over and over in one 'sitting', or may be returned to after some time has elapsed.

6. The sixth variation takes into account the possibility of the intention going through a series of alterations through reflection and evaluation throughout the process.

I now want to look at certain of the elements that enter into the process, in greater detail, beginning with the one that Luquet himself examines first.

### ***Elements of Process: Intention***

#### ***Fortuitous Realism***

Not surprisingly Luquet begins at the beginning, with what it is that makes the child want to draw something. However his examination of the factors that bring about and influence the initiation of a drawing is not solely concentrated in the chapter on Intention, but occurs throughout the book, and is reflected on at length in his 'Conclusion Psychologiques'.

The beginning point so to speak of the emergence of intention he describes in his chapter in Part 2 on 'Fortuitous Realism', where the beginnings of the *act* of drawing are examined in the larger context of the child's exploration of the world through touch. He describes how in the earliest stage the child is keen to explore their environment through touch and is fascinated by the traces that may occur as a consequence.<sup>xvi</sup> Luquet does not consider these explorations to be such that they can be described as 'intentional', but only as 'the simple effect of the spontaneous release of excess neuromuscular energy'.<sup>9</sup>

In tracing marks with water onto stone, or into sand, with anything on any surface, the child according to Luquet starts to notice the trace that is left and a mark or a configuration of marks is seen as being 'like' something ('fortuitous realism'). This emphasis on the mimetic basis of the birth of representation and the child's excitement over its discovery dominates Luquet's account at the expense of other possibilities: for example, that the child is

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<sup>8</sup> see *Children's Drawings* ('*Le Dessin Enfantin*') Georges-Henri Luquet, trans. Alan Costall, Free Association Books, 2001, London, New York, §12, 13 & 14, pp 14 - 17. Luquet introduces 'Automatisme Graphique' at the end of the chapter on 'Intention', which implies that he recognises repetition, as such, as a form of intention.

<sup>9</sup> *Children's Drawings* ('*Le Dessin Enfantin*') Georges-Henri Luquet, 2001, 57. However having observed what appears to be the most remarkably purposive nature of one-year old 'energy', I am doubtful that any movements are simply the result simply of an 'excess of neuromuscular energy.'



fascinated and excited by the trace for and in itself; or that the trace is not representative of an object but of for example a movement; that the trace, or imprint is evidence of their action, of their being *there*, and remains present and visible after they have brought it about. This will be returned to in Chapter 2.

Even before this stage, before the child begins to show, or express, or shape something whether for themselves or whether for another, a kind of attention is brought to the trace, or the mark, to things in the world, to light perhaps, or shadows, that is concentrated, that we might describe as 'rapt'. It is also important to emphasize, as Luquet himself does, that at this early stage the child will become obsessive about, or their attention will be caught, by specific things or by a particular physical *process*. He remarks on a child of 13 months who repeatedly lifted and dropped the lid of a tankard 79 times consecutively.<sup>xvii</sup> Perhaps this kind of concentrated attention is the beginning of the realisation of what happens in the mind when attention is maintained over a period of time. That as the lid is lifted and dropped each time it is different, even though the process is the same. That different things occur in the mind, and that it appears differently. That it can do so, when the action remains the same, is perhaps why the repetitious act, like the repetitious series of notes, can become so fascinating, but also how in its lack of variation, whether in the act or the mind, it can become so tortuous. Yet the child in their repetition of the act is getting to know *what* happens, and *that* it happens each time, and in listening to music, is getting to know what the sequence is, the sound, and the shape of it.

From this point onwards, Luquet claims, the child will 'continue for some time to make traces that are neither followed by a figurative interpretation nor provoked by any representational intention.'<sup>xviii</sup> However they will increasingly notice resemblances. How and why it is that at a certain age the child perceives a resemblance and names that which they have recognized, and why they eventually come to interpret their drawings as representations is not fully explained by Luquet in this section. Earlier in the chapter he refers to the significance of their observations of their parents' graphic activities, of the drawings in the books that are read to them, and of the images in the world around them.



Figure 3. Recognition of resemblance

An embroidery on the back of the sofa in the living room of my house, in which A at the age at one year was able to recognize the representation of the telegraph pole (despite the over-sized bird on top of it) and point to the telegraph pole he could see through the window directly above.

He also emphasizes the importance of imitation 'not in order to achieve what another has done but to imitate the manner in which he is doing it', not as a means but as an end in itself.<sup>xix</sup> In this part of this section Luquet is emphasizing the importance of the imitation of the *movement or the actions necessary* to the production of a drawing. This I have observed in countless examples of 'pretend' writing,<sup>10</sup> which is a form of drawing in the sense that it is a representation of writing before it becomes legible, and which children will produce with no intention of it being legible. Luquet himself asks the question, 'How does it arise? After all, the wish to imitate does not in itself ensure success. The sight of some movement performed by someone else gives no indication to the observer how they should produce the same movement, and it is only in quite exceptional cases that this is achieved from the outset'.<sup>xx</sup> However in imitating the movement of the hand with a pencil to draw a circle, a circular form of a kind will be achieved, even if it is not the fully closed and more regular circle of the adult (not something that many adults can do to their satisfaction either), and the movement when observed and imitated will produce a similar form. Showing *is* a form of instruction. The passage that follows seems rather contradictory, in that Luquet emphasizes the importance of the movement for its own sake, in which case the possibility of failure (to produce a similar form to that of an adult or another child) becomes irrelevant, but then describes it as a 'competitive sport' in which children prove they are as capable as others. 'Children make traces because in producing them they secure clear confirmation of the gift of a power of creativity equal to that of adults'<sup>xxi</sup> However they can through such comparison secure equal confirmation that they do not have such a power, which can if sustained or emphasized become very inhibiting.

When the child begins to have an intention, Luquet describes it in the following way:

drawings are, in essence, graphic gestures, provoked like any other gesture by the intimate connection between the physical and the mental. The intention to draw a certain object is the extension and manifestation of the child's mental representation: the object depicted is that which in the mind of the artist, has momentarily come to take an exclusive or preponderant position. The factors that lead the child to draw any particular object are tied up with those that give rise to the ideas of the corresponding object<sup>xxii</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> see Chapter 2, Part 2: Case Study 6 *The Office*.

Luquet does not elaborate on the very important link that he refers to here between drawing and gesture, and what gesture *is*, and *does*,<sup>11</sup> except that the child eventually finds (additional) meaning in the mark through the association of ideas and recognition of resemblance. He does not include the type of representation described by Arnheim below:

Such gestures may refer to concrete objects or events - such as mice or mountains or the encounter between two people - but also figuratively to the bigness of a task, the remoteness of a possibility, or a clash of opinions. It seems permissible to assume that the activity of deliberate artistic representation has its motor source in descriptive movement. The hand that traces the shape of the animal in the air during a conversation is not far from fixating this trace in the sand or on a wall. <sup>xxiii</sup>

The illustration overleaf shows a man working in the garden, as drawn by a four-year-old girl. The whirl at the right depicts a lawn mower not only because the rotating lines render the characteristic motion of the machine visually, but also because the child's arm did so during the drawing. The child is both *enacting* and thus imitating the movement of the mower in the act of drawing as well as *showing* the movement of the mower. It is possible to say that the mower is realised doubly, in its appearance and in its movement, and in the drawing the reference is not only to the mower but to all circular movement per se.

Luquet does not provide any examples of the way the child may use gesture 'figuratively' nor in the depiction of a *sense* of something, 'the bigness of a task' for example, the rhythm of a dance, the clapping in a song, This type of denotation I relate to 'exemplification', given particular analysis and prominence by Nelson Goodman.<sup>xxiv</sup> Exemplification is of particular importance to this study because of its relevance to 20th Century and contemporary fine art practice in which a signifier stands for something because it has certain qualities or a particular property, and not because of it bearing a likeness. It possesses the very qualities to which it refers, but it also has a much wider reference in that its signification is not confined to a quality of a particular object, but to an entire class of qualities that may be possessed by a wide range of objects. It is this aspect of contemporary practice that is so often ignored by or unknown to many who struggle to understand the nature of contemporary art.

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<sup>11</sup> 'Luquet failed to note that children's earliest so-called scribbles can sometimes be representationally highly charged. In such cases the child is concerned not with the marks left over, as it were, on the paper, but the act of mark-making itself. For example the child may trace the swooping movements of a fighter-jet while making appropriate, if off-putting, noises. See the classic paper by John Matthews (1984) on such 'action representations'.' (From the Introduction by Allan Costall to *Children's Drawings* ('*Le Dessin Enfantin*') Georges-Henri Luquet trans. Alan Costall, Free Association Books, 2001, London, New York xxii, note 18).

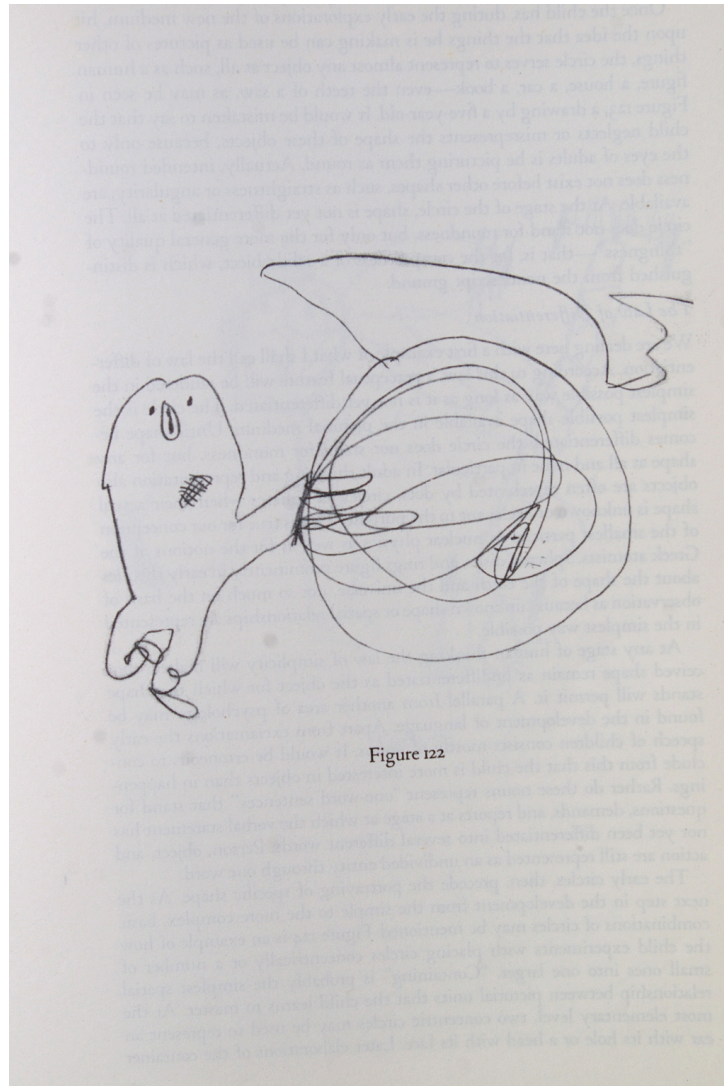


Figure 4. (Figure 122. p.139 'Art and Visual Perception' Rudolf Arnheim)

In the example given by Arnheim above, the gesture that makes the spiralling line, exemplifies the motion of the mower. The trace is both a representation of circular movement *and is the result of* circular movement, and it is the circular movement of the mower that is denoted, not the appearance of the blades. Exemplification will be examined at much greater length in Chapter 2, with particular reference to the case study of *Clapsong Painting* in the section on *Objects of Representation*.

## *Summary*

In looking at this initial point of departure of the process, it is clear that it is by no means a simple or straightforward event when a child begins to act in ways that bring about a series of marks that we can describe as a drawing. It is neither straightforward for the child nor the adult, for the adult will have his or her own notions about what comprises a drawing.<sup>12</sup>

We have seen that it has its beginnings in what Luquet describes as 'excess neuro-muscular activity' but I observed that it is difficult to distinguish such activity as being without intention or purpose even in the infant. Eventually the marks made become seen as representing something familiar to the child (fortuitous realism) but this emphasis on the mimetic basis of representation has led to the perpetuation of a mimetic model in many classical and contemporary texts on children's drawing, and has limited the recognition of other modes of symbolization:

Researchers often hold unconscious assumptions about what constitutes drawing. It is largely Piaget's theory (though there are other influences) which has caused people to think of drawing solely in terms of a problem-solving process through which children construct a rationalistic, 'realistic' depiction of objects in space.<sup>xxv</sup>

Luquet himself did not pursue the wider implications of gesture and its symbolic potential as articulated by Arnheim. In these initial stages it has also been pointed out that there are other factors that enter into the process: the child's imitation of adult's actions, and the obsessive repetition of acts (which are sometimes but by no means always connected to drawing). There are therefore three key factors that are in need of further investigation: *gesture*, *imitation*, and *repetition* and we have not yet arrived at what could be described as 'Intention' proper in the sense of the child having a clear intention to make a drawing of a specific subject. I am acutely aware that each of these 'elements' requires a doctoral thesis in its own right, and I shall not be able within the confines of this thesis to examine imitation, and repetition in the depth that they deserve, although they are discussed at some length later in this chapter and in Chapter 2 in relation to specific examples. Gesture is examined at length in Chapter 2 in the section on Gesture and Drawing.

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<sup>12</sup> The young woman with children of her own who typed my MA thesis observed how she would never have thought there was anything to the examples I wrote about. She said she would have seen them as rubbish and put them straight in the bin.

## ***Predilection***

Even before the child has an 'intention', Luquet observed that often many children have a 'predilection' for some things rather than others.

At the beginning of 'L'Intention' Luquet describes drawing as a game: 'Children draw for fun' is his first statement, and he later goes on to remark that because it is a game, they regard it very seriously, and that also it can, "like any other game, take on an obsessive quality'. It is not only the activity that can be obsessive, but also the subject of the drawing. In the following passage he introduces the term 'predilection', for the marked preferences she or he may have for specific subjects or motifs:

Certainly, the body of work drawn even by the same artist can, depending on the particular child, show striking differences both in the overall number of drawings and in the nature and relative proportion of the different motifs. Many different children show a marked and sometimes exclusive predilection to reproduce a certain category of objects. Such specialization can become a vocation and reflects something about the child's character. A most curious example of this comes from a well-known archaeologist who, when he was no more than four, had a veritable passion for umbrellas which neither he nor his parents could explain. He would never go out without an umbrella, drew them continually, and would often ask the grown-ups around him to draw them for him. <sup>xxvi</sup>

By using the term 'predilection' here, Luquet is introducing a very significant factor, which once again distinguishes his work from that of others, in that he is recognizing, (because in the face of the evidence he has collected, he has to), that the child has already before the act of drawing is initiated, something in the mind which has taken '*an exclusive or preponderant place*'.<sup>xxvii</sup> It is because of this, or rather because of his insistence that the child be able to determine when and what she wishes to draw, that this evidence became available. It is also significant that he is making a clear parallel here with the nature of adult artistic activity: he recognizes the same characteristics, and the same type of obsessive fascination. Even when it is not obsessive, that which brings about the intention in the first place is still 'whatever has momentarily come to take an exclusive or preponderant place'.

However something further is implied here: by using the term 'predilection' he is also implying a degree of predetermination, a propensity for a response to certain things rather than others, from the very outset of a child's engagement with the world. He implies therefore that the child often will have no *intention*, in the sense in which the term is commonly used, as *intending to*, but more a kind of *attention*, which extends to the things that exist or occur around them. However if we use the term *attention* in the

Husserlian sense, as a directedness of consciousness, it is *intentional*, in that it is always *of something or towards something*.

It is important to point out that attention in this Husserlian sense, is different from Luquet's notion of *predilection*, the latter being that which the child pays attention to *more* than all the other things that are around them, or which in particular *captures* their attention, and captures it repeatedly. In Husserl, it is within this area of *attention*, that the possibility for different kinds of '*intensive* modifications' can occur. Seeing something as something signifies a movement, according to Husserl, into the 'horizon' of the object, in which other interpretations, or noemas are situated. <sup>xxviii</sup>

The act of drawing could perhaps be described as a *gesture towards that which is seen as something*, and in that sense it is also surely the gesture of a *thought*. It must be remembered even when it is not obsessive, whatever brings about the intention in the first place is 'whatever has momentarily come to take an exclusive or preponderant place' in the mind of the child. Perhaps this principle can be applied equally to the earlier stages before a clear intention can be identified: in other words, before any intention occurs there is a predilection which is evident in what the child gives particular attention to, and confirmed by the acts they perform on them or with them. With or without predilection however, Luquet writes on the selectivity of attention, or the particularity of a certain kind of attention, in the following way:

When perceiving and remembering, the mind is not just an inert recipient that relays and conserves experiences, 'the data' just as they are ('telle quelle l'expérience,'le donné'). Every individual mind, and not just special kinds of mentality, can be compared to a *resonator or coloured screen that only allows certain wavelengths to pass through*. ('à un résonateur ou à un de ces écrans colorés qui ne se laissent traverser que par certaines radiations' - the text in italics is my own translation)<sup>13</sup>

This idea of a screen bears a striking resemblance to the analogy used by Henri Bergson in 'Matter & Memory'. What is allowed to pass through and why, differs somewhat between the two, but functionality, quickness of response, instinct for survival, evolutionary adaptability and development of mind all figure in the accounts each writer gives.

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<sup>13</sup> It is interesting to note here that Costall inserts 'data' into the translation which in Luquet's original text is put as 'l'expérience' only. Costall also translates 'écrans' as 'a resonator or filter that responds only to certain wavelengths.' (G-H Luquet. *Children's Drawings ('Le Dessin Enfantin')* Trans. Alan Costall. London, New York: Free Association Books. 2001. §44, p. 55)



*'What you have to explain, then, is not how perception arises, but how it is limited, since it should be the image of the whole, and is in fact reduced to the image of that which interests you'* <sup>xxix</sup>

At this point Bergson introduces the concept of '*indetermination*', as a means of distinguishing the nature of human consciousness from that of the animal kingdom and allows us to be aware of what we perceive in a way, which albeit geared to action, is able to be independent of it. The '*zone of indetermination*' as he puts it, is what differentiates the human from the more primitive species and distinguishes choice from instinct and reflex. There is a delay, or a pause of varying degree, in which we can make a choice whether to act or not, and if we do, in what way.

'Consciousness - in regard to external perception, - lies in just this choice. But there is, in this necessary poverty of our conscious perception, something that is positive, that foretells spirit: it is, in the etymological sense of the word, discernment'. <sup>xxx</sup>

Our perception then, both argue, is selective and intentional in the sense that it is geared to action i.e., it is purposive; but most importantly it is also inextricably linked to memory.

Restore, on the contrary, the true character of perception; recognize in pure perception a system of nascent acts which plunges roots deep into the real; and at once perception is seen to be radically distinct from recollection; the reality of things is no more constructed or reconstructed, but touched, penetrated, lived; and the problem at issue between realism and idealism, instead of giving rise to interminable metaphysical discussions, is solved, or rather dissolved, by intuition. <sup>xxxi</sup>

He has already made clear the unsustainable propositions of '*realism*':

Here we put our finger on the mistake of those who maintain that perception springs from the sensory vibration properly so called, and not from a sort of question addressed to motor activity. They sever this motor activity from the perceptive process; -----But the truth is that perception is no more in the sensory centres than in the motor centres; it measures the complexity of their relations, and is, in fact, where it appears to be. <sup>xxxii</sup>

He illustrates this through the way in which in infancy through the exploration of the external world, the infant gradually learns about their own position in space, and that this realisation involves a movement from the acquisition of information at the periphery (toes, fingers, mouth) through '*impressions received on the surface of my body*' and an active interaction with actual objects, to that which I experience as constant and invariable, that is, my body. Without this we would have no understanding of extension, of exteriority and interiority:

My *body* is that which stands out as the centre of these perceptions; *my personality* is the being to which these actions are referred. The whole subject becomes clear if we travel thus from the

periphery to the centre, as the child does, and as we ourselves are invited to by immediate experience and by common sense.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

The significance of an active bodily interaction with actual objects, and the surrounding world and the development of knowledge through this experience, of process and *ways of going about doing things* and furthermore, the way in which this knowledge *informs* our perceptions will be returned to in Chapter 4.

Throughout Luquet's writing he emphasizes the way in which children's experience of daily life, the nature of their relations with others, and their environment all enter into the things they make. The 'origin of something new' is ever present in the things they notice and what they make of them, through 'interpretation' which occurs through the perception of forms of resemblance, (of form, of graphic representation or of role), and as a consequence of their ability to move *across categories* and transfer the qualities and characteristics of a thing in one category into or onto those of another.<sup>14</sup>

Luquet's concept of 'predilection' is somewhat different from the kind of selectivity that Bergson is describing in 'Matière et Mémoire'. It is a particular type of attention, and in order to distinguish it more exactly, it will be necessary to return to the subject of the nature of attention in later chapters. The child's 'predilection' is not necessarily born out of external circumstances, although it may take the form of a preoccupation with certain objects in the immediate environment of the child: the child with a predilection for umbrellas will fortuitously find them in all sorts of different places, and people's homes wherever he may be taken to visit; the child with the predilection for hats, who would never leave the house without wearing one, will similarly find them in one form or another wherever he goes. So also the child who becomes obsessed with a category of creatures, for example insects and small earthly creatures, will see a worm in the till roll receipt from the supermarket store where she is shopping with her mother.<sup>15</sup>

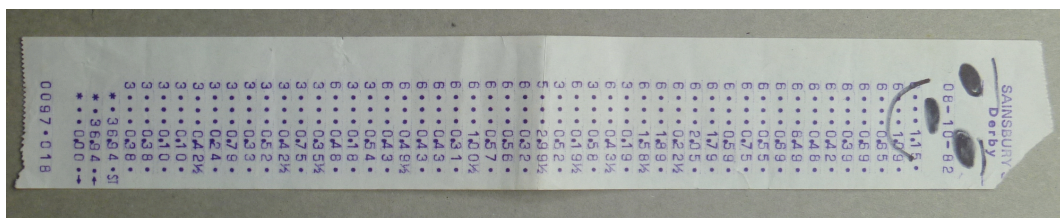


Figure 5. R, 4.11 worm

<sup>14</sup> see §18, §19 & §20 G-H Luquet. *Children's Drawings ('Le Dessin Enfantin.')* Trans. Alan Costall. London, New York: Free Association Books. 2001. However in these passages as elsewhere, Costall translates 'mobilité d'esprit' as 'the childish labile mind and imagination' which I consider is better translated as 'mobility of mind'. This mobility is critical to the way in which children can make surprising correspondences in their representations and commentaries, and is examined more closely in Chapter 4 in the section on 'categorical intuition'.

<sup>15</sup> This is an example of 'Analogie Morphogique', a form of association which will be examined later in this chapter (see 37-8)

Luquet does not speculate on how or why this should occur, on whether it is symptomatic of an obsessive nature, or whether there are any psychological reasons for it, neither does he venture into any theories on the unconscious, or the pre-conscious. He presents the evidence for its existence, and makes reference to the importance of the environment in which the child is situated as a stimulus for the types of subject drawn: 'animiliers' for example, live in the country.<sup>16</sup>

The influence of the things around the child, in their environment, and in their family life will as he puts it '*propose*' an idea to the child, and he is careful to accentuate that they '*propose*' rather than '*impose*': 'external circumstances do not impose their '*will*' on the child, even though they may somehow influence his or her spontaneity.'<sup>xxxiv</sup> Furthermore these are not necessarily things that occur or are '*at hand*' at the time of the making of the drawing, but may have occurred on the same day: 'a walk taken by the child, a button the child has found and brought back home, a circus or concert to which she has been taken, the mouse which has been caught in the mouse trap, the stove that was lit again at the beginning of winter'.<sup>xxxv</sup> In other words, added to the child's predilection or attention to the things around them, is the role of memory. Before examining the role of memory however, it is essential to look at what happens once the intention to draw something occurs.

### ***Summary***

In order to get to the point where the child can be said to have an *intention* it was necessary to examine the nature of the child's '*attention*' to particular things in the world around them, and I pointed out that in the Husserlian sense, all attention, indeed all perception is '*intentional*' in that it is meaningful and purposive: the object is seen *as* something. In comparing Luquet's and Bergson's concepts of perception, I hope to have brought attention to certain striking similarities of thought which both contextualise and elucidate Luquet's thinking. Both Luquet and Bergson were of the view that our perception is in its essence selective and purposive, based essentially on our evolutionary history. Luquet's observation of the child's fascination with specific types of thing, their '*predilection*,' often obsessive in nature is, as Luquet himself pointed out, a characteristic that can be observed in both the adult artist and the child, *and this observation is particular to Luquet*. There is implied here a further selectivity or type of attention which requires further investigation. In addition to this propensity to be attracted to certain types of thing, both Luquet and Bergson emphasize

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<sup>16</sup> Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001. §5, 8. He also describes in this section, the range of the child's '*repertoire*': 'all kinds of genres adopted by professional artists: portraits, still lives, drawings based on legendary or historical events,(which children treat as identical), genre painting, and illustrations of real or imagined stories'.

the importance of the relation of memory to perception. Luquet alludes regularly to the influence of the environment of the child, and the nature of the life their family leads, on the kinds of things that are selected. Luquet puts this relation between the environment of the child and the kind of things they are stimulated to draw, as a 'proposal'. The influence of the things around the child, in their environment, and in their family life will as he puts it '*propose*' an idea to the child, and he is careful to accentuate that they 'propose' rather than 'impose'. This too is both an accurate and an insightful way of putting the relation between the adult artist and the things they respond to in the world around them.

So far therefore, I hope I have elucidated certain aspects of Luquet's account of how the child begins the process of drawing, and reaches the point at which it can be said that there is a discernible intention to draw a certain something. I have pointed out that there are some parts of Luquet's account that he himself does not discuss at length in '*Le Dessin Enfantin*' although he does point them out: gesture; repetition; and imitation. These he recognizes as essential elements in the development of the process of drawing, with the role of gesture being a key factor in the production of marks, which the child perceives as having a resemblance to something. In this respect it could be said, to carry over Luquet's own term, that the drawing itself in the process of its making, or once completed, 'proposes' an idea of something to the child. This is 'fortuitous realism'. Once this is established and the child begins to look for things, or recognize more things in the drawings they make, they then begin to set out on the act of drawing with an idea to draw something in particular. However I also pointed out that Luquet's account of the child's realisation of the representational capabilities inherent in drawing is confined to a mimetic form of representation, and does not refer to other forms such as exemplification, and that the nature of the objects and forms of representation will be returned to and examined more closely in Chapter 2.

In this chapter it is now necessary to examine the distinguishing features of what Luquet referred to as 'Intellectual Realism': the 'Internal Model'; 'the Type'; 'Interpretation' ; the representation of space ('*rabattement*', transparency and 'mixed points of view'); and the representation of time ('graphic narration'). One of the most problematic concepts in Luquet, is quite what he means by the term 'Internal Model' and how it relates to Intention, and it is this area I wish to concentrate on next.

## ***The Internal Model***

Once the child has an intention to draw something, which may be something for which they have a 'predilection', or that attracts their attention and 'proposes' the idea for a drawing in the child's mind, Luquet introduces the concept of the 'internal model'.

We now turn to the internal model of an individual as opposed to a generic model. The construction of the internal model involves *a creative mental act, an unconscious elaboration of material yielded by experience*, namely visual impressions of the actual object or picture of it, which are *retained in memory*. This elaboration occurs in the form of a *selection*, a choice between the different components of the object represented. *Each of these elements is just as real as all the rest, and they are all equally visible.* (my emphasis) <sup>xxxvi</sup>

Luquet is really saying here that there are two phases of selectivity occurring: perception itself is selective, and that in the construction or as he puts it 'elaboration' of the 'internal model' there is a further selection. 'This elaboration occurs in the form of a selection, a choice between the different components of the object represented'.

The 'internal model' is the most difficult of the concepts that Luquet introduces, yet it is one of the elements of his theory that *he* identifies as a key element, and it is as integral to his concept of perception as is 'predilection'. It is also what for him characterizes 'intellectual realism', and the nature of the child's way of going about representing the world.

It has always been difficult to pin down, especially in terms of the extent to which it is claimed to 'intervene' between the object being drawn and the child's perception of it. It raises all sorts of questions about the fundamental nature of the perception of the child, and it has been taken to mean that there is a sort of 'schema' or form that the child adopts which is more symbolic than it is observationally 'correct'. It implicitly assumes the objects of representation to be observable, yet to be subject to a generalized form, which is then made more particular by what are called 'critical details' (Freeman), or 'exemplarité' (Luquet). In *Le Dessin Enfantin* the chapter on the internal model follows that on 'The Type', which presents his observations of the way that children find ways of depicting things and build on them (conservation of type) and in this chapter he seeks to explain how 'the type' is constructed:

the type is not an artificial construction, a mere label we apply to a set of similar drawings of the same motif by the same child. It corresponds to something psychologically real within the mind of the child: the *internal model*. It is this that evokes in the children's minds the representation of the object and the intention to draw it, and even when these are suggested by the sight of an object or model, the resulting drawing is not, as one might assume, a mere

copy. The object being drawn, before it can be translated onto the paper, necessarily takes the form of a visual image.

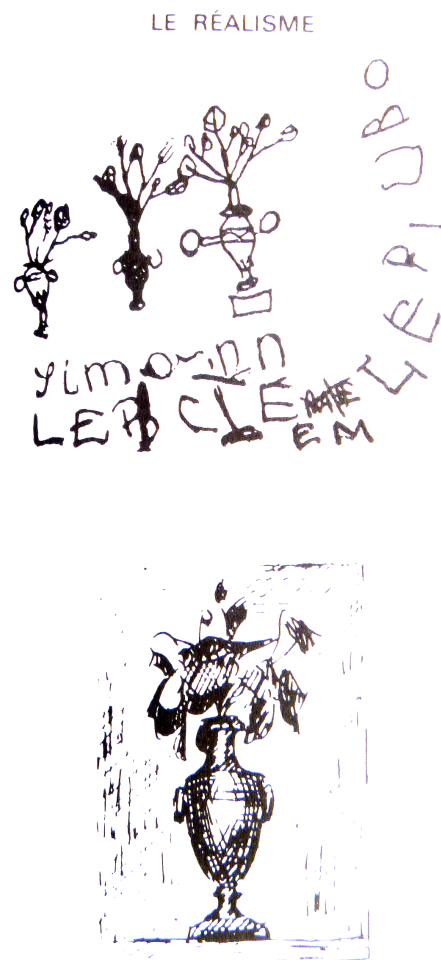
However this image is by no means the slavish reproduction of any of the perceptions afforded the artist by a view of the object or by a corresponding drawing. It is a refraction of the object to be drawn through the mind of the child, *a creative, though spontaneous reconstruction arising from an extremely complex process of elaboration* (my italics). The term 'internal model' is meant to distinguish the object or model in the strict sense from this mental representation, which is expressed in the drawing. <sup>xxxvii</sup>

Whilst the term can be and has been interpreted to mean that a schema or 'type' is used to represent an object or form, and the child is not perceiving the object accurately but using a pre-formed template to stand for it, what Luquet writes here is much more complex, and he goes on to give examples where the child is often depicting in the drawing a *fuller more comprehensive* account of the object, than is immediately visible to their eyes. For example:

the view of a penknife on the table which a girl (3.6) was drawing provoked her intention to draw it, but instead of the actual penknife in front of her, her drawing produced the 'intelligible' penknife, in the Platonic sense. The penknife had two blades, and both were closed and hence were not visible. But her drawing depicted an open penknife with a single blade. The drawing of a vase of flowers from nature (figs 81-83) is particularly revealing, since the child had constantly looked at the object (fig.84) in order to create a resemblance. <sup>xxxviii</sup>

The drawings in the following illustration of the vase of flowers described by Luquet in this passage were by Simonne aged 6 years and 9 months, and were from observation of the vase that is reproduced in the drawing (by an adult) in Fig.84. The rings on either side are shown in such a way that they are revealed as movable and open, and are not shown simply as they appear from a specific viewpoint. This is the kind of evidence that convinced Luquet that the child feels compelled to draw what they *know* of the object, and that best *defines* it, and 'lays it out to view' so to speak.

The 'type' is also a means of formal economy in that certain things are recognised as being similar in shape, and for the same reason things can turn into other things as a result. So there is an economy in using the same basic form for the trunk of a tree for all trees, and the same basic shapes for human beings with the adoption of 'particularité' or exemplarity, to give them a specific identity.

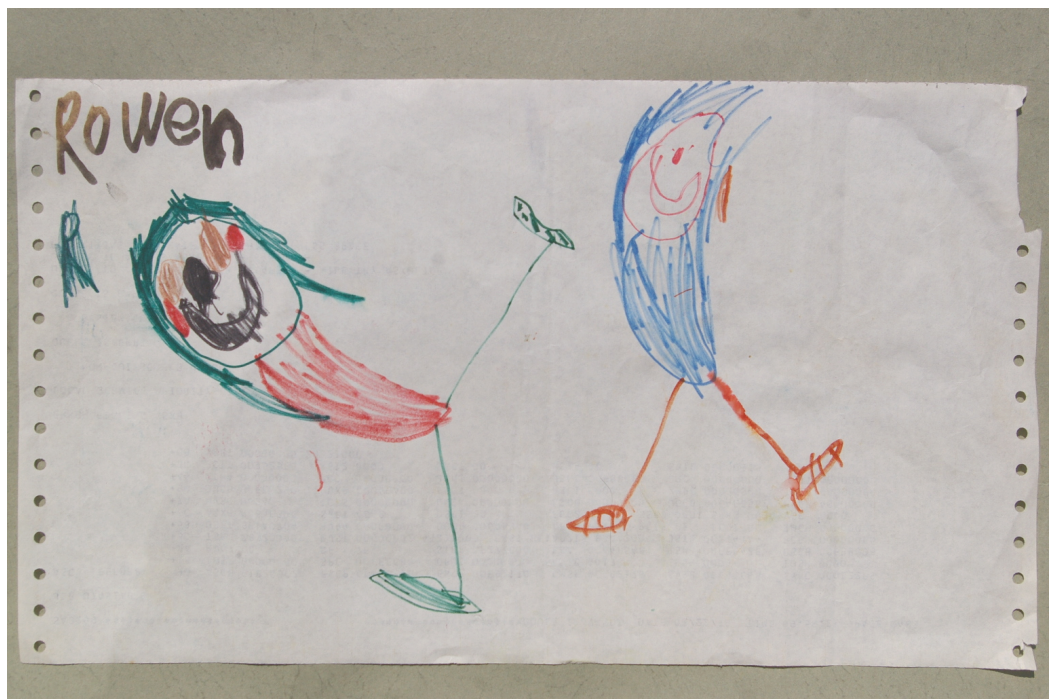


Figs 81-83 above & Fig 84 below. *Le Dessin Enfantin* Delachaux & Niestle. 155

Figure 6. The 'Internal Model'.

There is also the formal, physical and mental economy of the 'type' that has been developed for a particular thing or person, and which picks up on very specific characteristics of the person. In the case of the self-portraits below for example, there can be seen a development over time, of certain formal elements that are seen to repeat: very long legs and arms, and an increasing emphasis on large hands with lots of fingers. These are drawings by my daughter whose nickname was 'fingers Ro' because she was always exploring things with her fingers.





R.3.1 (above) & 4.4 (below)

Figure 7: the 'Type'





R. 4. 11: development of a 'type'.

Figure 8: Development of a 'Type'.



Fig. 45. Gayant and Madame Gayant (after a photograph):  
the subject of the drawings in figures 37–44.

Figure 9: Simonne Luquet, Development of a 'Type'.<sup>xxxix</sup>

In the top image of the illustration above, Simonne Luquet's seven consecutive drawings at the age of 7 years, are based on the memory of a photograph which is reproduced in the drawing below it. Luquet adds to the caption 'There is 'growth' in the type across the series of drawings, by which I assume he means there is a growth in complexity.

To go back to the example of the penknife: the child knows that the knife opens, and that it is a defining characteristic that it does so, and *in order to represent it fully, which is in her view, accurately* it is necessary to show it in such a way. It is an example of a synthesis between the observed and the remembered functions of the penknife. Later in his conclusion, Luquet returns to the concept of the internal model as an argument against empiricism and the 'mental atomism' of associationism, and their 'assumption of the passivity of mind'.

Children actively reconstruct the data provided by their perceptions, selecting those details to omit and those to include. When drawing they replace their raw perceptual impressions with an internal model of the object, and this is just as true for their drawings from nature and copied drawings, as for their drawings from memory.<sup>xli</sup>

The phrase 'raw perceptual impressions' opens up this statement to an accusation of naturalism, even though he continues:

children's drawings provide incontestable evidence against the empiricist conception of mental life. According to that doctrine, mental representations should simply copy empirical realities conveyed by sensory impressions, supposedly imposed upon a compliant and purely receptive mind.<sup>xli</sup>

He goes on to attack the notion of perception being one of the additive or synthetic accretion of information, and that concepts form from the addition or combination of such perceptions. He was therefore attacking the underlying concepts of empiricist science of the time, as was Bergson. 'Children are already human beings' he declares, 'even if they are at the very outset of being human', and we should not be so perplexed by the fact that their drawings do not 'progress chronologically from the parts to the whole and from the individual to the general'. On the contrary he asserts, it is the *whole* that is perceived before any of the particulars of a perception, and furthermore he uses the term '*essentiality*' to describe that which is perceived within it.

Furthermore how could we explain the fact that certain details are regarded as the most essential, as constituting the 'substance' of the object in some way encapsulating or symbolising the totality?' 'If individual details only appear ...after the generic elements, we have to conclude that in the internal model of the earliest drawing these elements have been eliminated, *or more exactly put aside into a dark corner from which they will only emerge at a later time. (my italics)* .....children impose a hierarchy of value based on the importance they attribute to them. There is also another hierarchy based on the degree of their generality.....not only do they see the general in the particular, but they even see the individual as general before they see it as individual. Again these facts run counter to associationist theory. Children, and hence the human mind, progress not only from the whole to its parts, but also from the general to the particular.<sup>xlii</sup>

Luquet's concept of the 'internal model' could be interpreted in phenomenological terms as very similar to the concept of the 'intentional object'. Luquet has made clear as I pointed out on page 29, that the 'internal model' is '*a creative, though spontaneous reconstruction arising from an extremely complex process of elaboration*' which implies that it is a construction in the mind, in other words a psychic phenomenon. This risks taking us back to the division between the (human) perceiver and the perceived (world) of Idealism and Empiricism that Husserl and Luquet (from his statements above) were so concerned to differentiate their theories from. It was the notion that this 'model' intervened between the child and the world, that I took exception to at the very beginning on reading Norman Freeman's account of Luquet's concept of the 'internal model', and I took up my studies for the Masters in order to understand more fully what Luquet meant.

Husserl warned about the separation of the intentional object from that which is intended, and stressed that the *noesis* and the *noema* are inseparable:

Like perception *every* intensive mental process - just this makes up the fundamental part of intentionality - has its "intentional Object," i.e., its objective sense. Or in other words: to have sense or "to intend to" something (etwas "im Sinne zu haben"), is the fundamental characteristic of all consciousness which, therefore, is not just any mental living (Erlebnis) whatever, but is rather a <mental living> having sense, which is "noetic." <sup>xliii</sup>

But if in *this* way, we try to separate the actual Object (in the case of perception of something external, the perceived physical thing pertaining to Nature) and the intentional Object, including the latter <as> really inherently in the mental process as "immanent" to the perception, we fall into the difficulty that now *two* realities ought to stand over against one another while only *one* <reality> is found to be present and even possible. <sup>xliv</sup>

The critical difference here is that Luquet is concerned with what happens when the child has the *intention to draw something*, and they have to think about how to go about it. The model is a construct based on what the child's experience of the object is, how they remember it, and what best characterizes it. It is not how they *see* it in the first place. An idea has to form in the mind about *how to draw* it. Certain case studies in Chapter 2 throw up the question again, of how it is that we see something 'as' something in the first place, before doing anything about it. For Luquet, this aspect of seeing, 'seeing as' is integrated into the process through the other key elements of *interpretation* and *memory*.

## ***Interpretation and Memory***

A factor of the utmost importance throughout Luquet's observations, is his recognition of the child's mobility of mind (*mobilité d'esprit*)<sup>17</sup>: an ability to move across different categories, combined with the role of memory are essential to the process he describes. In examining the role of interpretation therefore it is necessary to recognize the way in which memory enters into it.

Either while creating the drawing, or once it is finished, the child will give it some interpretation. The intention is the perpetuation of the idea the child had in mind when starting to do the drawing whereas, the interpretation arises from an idea that occurs to the child during the course of doing the drawing and to which he or she applies a name.<sup>xlv</sup>

This fact Luquet observes, had largely been neglected, yet he found it to be 'limitless'. He cites a great variety of examples, and degrees of conflict that arise in the process of drawing where the interpretation vies with the intention for supremacy:

The interpretation is most often determined by the resemblance between the drawing and an object familiar to the child, and since the name of this object is used in the interpretation of the drawing I call it the designated object. The force with which the interpretation strikes the child depends on how much resemblance there is between the drawing and the designated object, or, to be more precise, the child's internal model of that object (§34)<sup>xlvi</sup>

Often the child is struggling with their ability to control the drawing, and their lack of skill is an element in the conflict that arises. The interpretation is sometimes used to re-align the intention with the way the drawing is turning out. A drama can often emerge out of this with a running commentary.<sup>xlvii</sup> The child can also forget their original intention whilst at the same time demonstrating remarkable powers of long-term memory.

## ***Forms of Analogy***

Luquet's observations on the different types of analogy demonstrate the interconnections between categories of subject and object, of role and function, and of form and representation that come into play in the process of making. These interconnections depend upon the recognition of resemblance *as well as* an understanding of roles and functions.

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<sup>17</sup> 'un autre facteur, d'ordre purement psychique, à savoir la mobilité d'esprit, qui est un des traits caractéristiques et unanimement reconnus de la psychologie enfantine'. G.H.Luquet, *Le Dessin Enfantin*, Neuchâtel, Suisse, Paris: Delachaux & Niestle 1977, 1984. §16. 33. Costall translates this phrase as 'the labile condition of their minds' which seems an inappropriate and inadequate translation, for what is labile is not necessarily mobile.

The child is essentially a 'teleologist' in the Socratic sense. The child's representation of things is, to use Renan's term, 'anthropocentric'. A young girl used to refer to things exclusively according to their role, not their name. A chair was 'a to-sit-on', a plate, 'a to-eat-from'. Once in an attempt to catch her out, I pointed to a slug and asked her 'What's that then?' I felt rather sheepish when she replied: 'That's a to-stamp-on'.<sup>xlviii</sup>

Analogy depends upon memory and association, but it also depends upon the ability to transfer a set of logical or structural relations from one category of things to another, or refer to aspects of a thing that are not usually referred to (the definitions above for example). This ability is returned to in the section on *Ground and Context* in Chapter 2, and examined in depth in relation to categorial intuition in Chapters 3 and 4.

Luquet identified two different categories of analogy that influence the making of a drawing:

1. '*Analogie de Role*' in which for example, the drawing of a fork will be followed by that of a spoon, a knife, a plate; a jug by a glass; a flower by a garden.
2. '*Analogie d'Aspect*' occurs in two ways:
  - a) '*Analogie Morphologique*' (analogy of form): in which the form of something will stimulate drawings of things of a similar shape or form, and:
  - b) '*Homonymie Graphique*' : a resemblance in a form of graphic depiction.<sup>xlix</sup>

In other words, there is the recognition of a resemblance between the shape of something and a shape that may have been made either purposefully, or inadvertently in the drawing; or a resemblance is recognised between the drawing and a form of graphic denotation.

In the next chapter I shall give examples in which the form of an object may stimulate the drawing that is made *upon* it, as in the example that I referred to earlier where the way in which items were printed on a till roll were perceived as being like the segments of a worm, which prompted the drawing of a head at the top, and its naming as 'worm' (see p.36).

In his conclusion, Luquet returns to the role of association after emphasizing the way in which the child's attention is fixed on the present. The intervention of interpretation and its influence upon the intention, and in the earlier stages synthetic incapacity (spatial or logical incoherence), he cites as evidence of some of the ways in which the child's attention is focused on the present 'since the present is the moment of action'.<sup>1</sup> This may seem to contradict what he has been saying about the very important role of memory, but the point he goes on to make is that 'the discontinuity between the past and the present is never absolute'. One of the characteristics of children as he has pointed out, is their '*mobilité d'esprit*'. 'Past and present are linked to one another by the association of ideas, which, as we have seen, constantly intervenes in drawings from the earliest age.'<sup>li</sup>

To take just the association of ideas by resemblance, a resemblance between two objects or situations does not exist in itself, but only in relation to a mind capable of noticing it, and abstracting it from the differences that any resemblance always involves. Association by resemblance thus already implies a sense of analogy, and serves as the basis of generalisation and imagination, both of which are indispensable for thought and action. <sup>lii</sup>

Luquet implies that children acquire this ability very early on, as soon as interpretation starts to happen, which we cannot assume only occurs with the acquisition of language. Indeed Luquet implies very strongly that the 'sense of analogy' is inbuilt, that it is the way in which our minds are structured, and is what facilitates our ability to generalise and hypothesize. Children need to hypothesize and *test out* their ideas in order to be able to speculate and to acquire practical knowledge. 'Otherwise if the mind does not acquire *circumspection*, it remains inactive and incapable of progress.'(my italics) <sup>liii</sup>

The importance of this term, what Luquet means by it, and the different ways in which it is utilized will be returned to in Chapter 4 in connection with Heidegger's use of the term 'Umsicht' translated as 'circumspection' by Macquarrie & Robinson in *Being and Time*. <sup>liv</sup>

Earlier in this chapter after the section about the predilection of the child for certain things in their environment, and the development of a desire to draw a particular kind of thing, I drew attention to Luquet's observation that children draw things they remember that may have occurred on the same day or even a considerable time before: 'a walk taken by the child, a button the child has found and brought back home, a circus or concert to which she has been taken, the mouse which has been caught in the mouse trap, the stove that was lit again at the beginning of winter' <sup>lv</sup>

Bergson states in 'Matter and Memory' that ' Perception in its pure state, is.....a part of things', <sup>lvi</sup> but if these immediate perceptions are simply threaded (by consciousness) onto a 'continuous string of memory', they would *remain* a part of things, rather than of ourselves. It is because of our ability to remember things that we are able to make the choices that are possible in what he describes as 'the zone of indetermination'.

The moment has come to reinstate memory in perception, to correct in this way the element of exaggeration in our conclusions, and so to determine with more precision the point of contact between consciousness and things, between the body and the spirit. <sup>lvii</sup>

Luquet writes vividly about the way in which children are able to remember often in precise detail events that have occurred or things seen, even after a long time: the 'mignonette seeds about to grow' that had been planted eight months earlier. <sup>lviii</sup> The role of memory has to be recognised as playing its part throughout the entire *process* from its inception. In the very early stages, where there is the recognition of a form in the trace the child has perhaps



inadvertently made by chance, there must reside or be activated, a memory of it. Recognition is in itself necessarily both a form of knowledge and a form of memory. The other element that enters into the process through Interpretation is that of association: the drawing of one thing, or the perception of one thing, can bring about the drawing of something else that is related to it in some way: 'A drawing of a postage stamp provokes that of an envelope. Various drawings of trains are followed immediately by drawings of cars. The association of ideas is also apparent in consecutive drawings of bread, a plate, a bottle, and of a knife, fork and spoon.'<sup>lix</sup> Luquet repeatedly returns to the nature of the child's perception and the way in which they will see something in a particular way, but which can then change category and be seen differently.

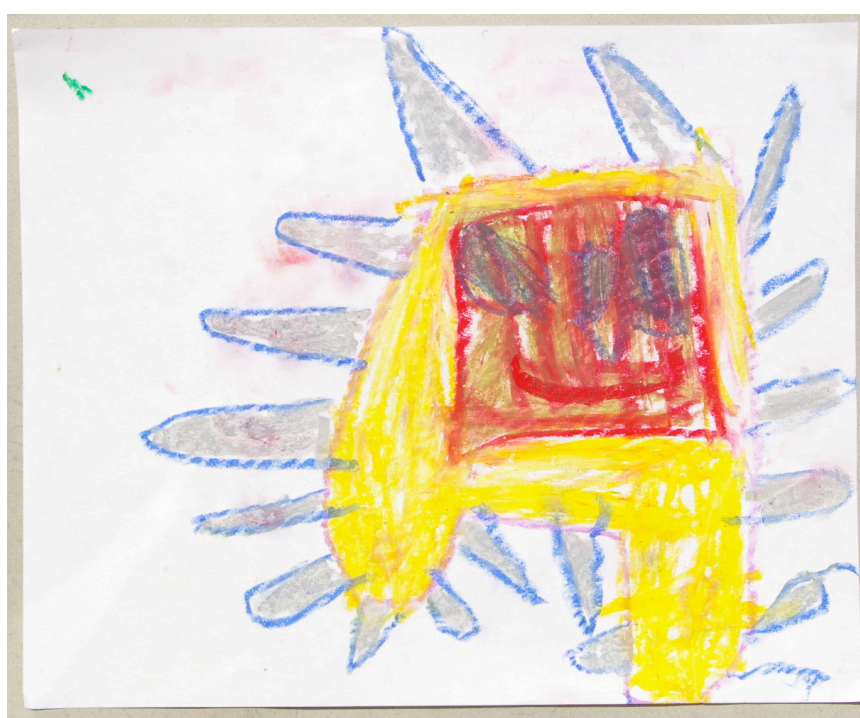


Figure 10. Interpretation. R: 4.11

The drawing above started as a car, then became spiky round the outside, then became a hedgehog with a commentary in the form of questions: 'what's spiky and starts with 'h'? ' 'eyes - nose - what kind of nose'; ' mouth - what kind of mouth?' It is an example of a running commentary on the drawing in the process of making, and continuous re-interpretation in a playful way, as referred to by Vygotsky in 'egocentric speech',<sup>lx</sup> and also in combination with actions as in the example given by Matthews.<sup>lxi</sup>

Throughout the entire process, Luquet describes a fluid and lively play between the forms that are being created and those they represent. This fluidity of categories (*mobilité d'esprit*), produces the most arresting statements by children: for example, my youngest daughter at the age of three when asked what she wanted to drink replied 'a stand orange'



which was immediately understood as a still orange because when you stand you are still, and she would have been told to 'stand still' on occasion. Her elder sister at the age of seven when watching me paint the roof of a barn I had made for her younger sister mused about the colour of the red I was using and said 'it's the same red as my roof (a stables I had made for her with a roof that came off) but an octave higher'. This was a very accurate analogy, as it was several tones (in colour terms) lighter. There is in both these statements evidence of a transfer of resemblance that is not only visual but also logical, across categories.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Space - Rabattement, Transparency, Mélange de Points de Vue.***

One of the most significant aspects of Luquet's theory is that the child's depiction of objects *in relation to one another* in 'Intellectual Realism' is as valid a representation as that termed 'visual realism', based on the conventions of perspective. In this respect Merleau-Ponty was mistaken.<sup>19</sup> As Costall writes in his Introduction to his translation of 'Le Dessin Enfantin':

Without seeming to notice the theoretical havoc he is causing, he manages to detach the concept of intellectual realism from the dominant theoretical opposition between seeing and knowing.<sup>20</sup> Admittedly, Luquet never seriously questions the *conceptual* basis of *intellectual* realism (as I have noted he is curiously negligent about that side of his theory). What he challenges, instead, is the *perceptual* basis of *visual* realism. And the effect is just as devastating<sup>lxii</sup>

In these forms of depiction the child is more fully able to describe, explain or work out her interaction between things in her world, and the relations she observes that obtain between them. Through these means the contents of a container can be revealed, and all the parts laid out to view; the movement around a space can be better described; a sequence of actions can be shown in relation to one another rather than as separate moments.

a variety of factors, including the association of ideas, attract the child's attention to one and then another element of the whole, yet each of these elements implies the undifferentiated whole.<sup>lxiii</sup>

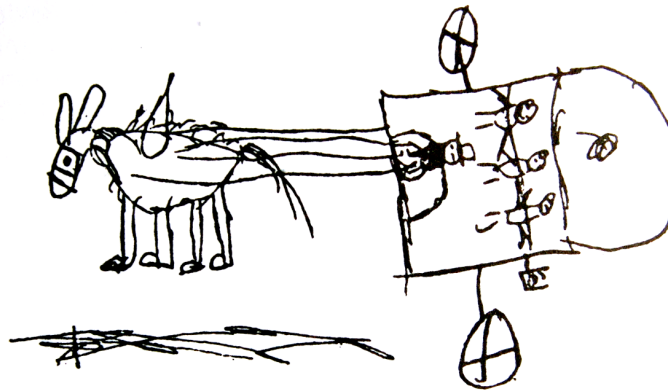
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<sup>18</sup> Further examples of this in relation to visual forms of depiction and the perception and use of found objects and materials will be described in detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>19</sup> see reference earlier in this chapter p.22: M.Merleau-Ponty 'The Child's Relations with Others' 1960 trans. William Cobb, *Primacy of Perception* Ed. James M.Edie 1964, Northwestern University Press. 96 - 155

<sup>20</sup> Note 15 in Costall's Introduction which refers to Arnheim's observation that in picture-making there is a synthesis of previous observations, which could be said to be from knowledge, but 'a knowledge that cannot be taken as an alternative to seeing' Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception* 1974.164

The child feels bound to put in the drawing essential parts that characterize the object to be depicted. It is necessary as was shown earlier,<sup>21</sup> for the penknife to be seen to have an array of blades; and it is necessary for a carriage to have clearly set out, a wheel on either side:



(Fig.111 Simonne, Francaise, 7yrs 7months, collection Luquet. Carriage. 'Rabattement' of wheels and hood of the carriage. Mélange de points de vue. G.H.Luquet *Le Dessin Enfantin*, Paris: Niestlé & Delachaux 149.)

Figure 11. Rabattement and Mélange de points de vue

This way of 'laying out' the components of a place, or an object, Luquet terms 'rabattement'. Objects are 'folded out' or they are made transparent so that the whole of the contents can be seen, or for example the other leg can be seen on the other side of the horse, the people in the carriage, or below, the baby in the pram, and the head in the hat. He observed also the use of a mixture of points of view (*mélange de points de vue*) in which certain parts of a drawing will be represented from above (as in a plan), in 'elevation', from the side, or from the front. He likens 'rabattement' and mixed points of view to the necessary conventions of architects' drawings, and designers who have to show relations in space that are both precise and clear, and in so doing challenged the common contemporary assumptions that were made about children's drawings of this kind being mistaken, or incomprehensible.

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<sup>21</sup> see p.31

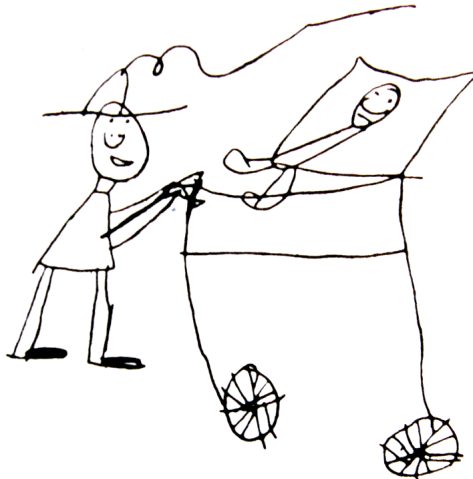


Fig. 104. — Jean L., Français, 6 ans 10 mois (collection Luquet).  
 Dame poussant une voiture de bébé. Haut de la tête visible sous le chapeau;  
 correction tacite plutôt que transparence (p. 135). Réalisme intellectuel  
 pour les narines (p. 134). Mélange de points de vue (p. 146).

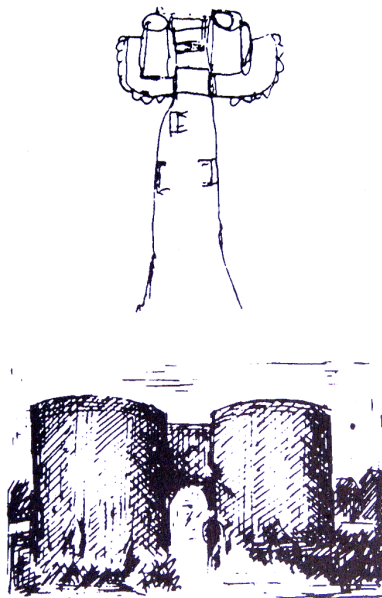


fig.125. Simonne Luquet, French, 6.6 (Luquet collection) Ancient town gate. Mixture of viewpoints

fig.126 The town gate drawn in fig 125 based on a photograph

Figure 12. Transparency & Mélange de Points de Vue<sup>lxiv</sup>

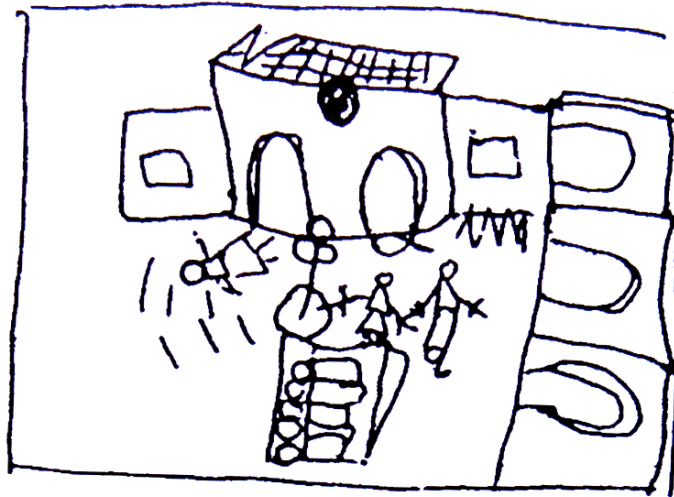


fig 118. Simonne Luquet, French, 6.6 (Luquet collection). Station. Rabattement

Figure 13. Rabattement<sup>lxv</sup>

Drawings which use 'rabattement' relate directly to the notion of topology,<sup>22</sup> in their depiction of the relation between things. The objects in space are drawn in relation to one another through such means as proximity, enclosure, separation, or connectivity *and* furthermore, as will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter, to the shape of the surface upon which they are drawn. By this I mean the way in which a drawing is positioned on the paper or the surface, which may be irregular, or a very definite shape. The surface or form will not necessarily be of a uniform, standard format, when it is selected by the child to make something. We have no idea what the shape of the paper was in the examples provided by Luquet, or by Piaget, because the edges of the paper and therefore

<sup>22</sup> see the paper by Barbara Wittmann 'Jean Piaget and the Child's Spontaneous Geometry' which is part of 'A Study of Children's Drawings as Psychological Instruments.' The language used by Wittmann reflects the approach that Piaget took to cognitive development, or as he put it, to 'genetic epistemology', which was dominated by a somewhat mechanistic model of development in which a genetic process is 'operationalized' through the various faculties as they are acquired. It is interesting that she writes "The drawing child constitutes a veritable machine that works on the production of a Euclidian future". What appears to be implicit in this statement is the notion that the 'Euclidian future' is an inevitable outcome. This study on Piaget is part of a book project on the history of children's drawings as research objects and instruments in the human sciences and humanities between 1880 and 1950 (working title: 'Meaningful Scribbles: An Epistemic History of Children's Drawings'). The project is being realized in the context of the research group Knowledge in the Making: Drawing and Writing as Research Techniques, which inquires into the role of graphic inscription techniques in the production of knowledge and is part of the inter-institutional research initiative "Knowledge in the Making: Drawing and Writing as Research Techniques," based at the MPIWG in Berlin and the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence, Italy. This information is from the project's website and a report on the project in MaxPlanckResearch, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. Berlin: January 2010

the limits of the space are not included in their illustrations (this is an area that is examined in *Ground and Context* in Chapter 2).

Whilst Wittman refers to Luquet in her paper she does not refer to rabattement or the other methods of depicting space (transparency and mixed points of view) presented by Luquet. However the following passage is of particular interest in the sense that it demonstrates parallel findings (albeit taking a different form) with Luquet's observations of the spatial representations used by children during the stage of intellectual realism and most importantly their legitimacy as conceptions of space:

Piaget discovered highly abstract mathematical structures in the child's primordial conception of space, in the process of which he remained quite aware of the difference between exact operation and intuitive spatial representation (*Anschauung*). He presupposes that the further development of geometric space should not be understood as the mere realization of physiological functions, but as a product of the child's interaction with the world, which builds up certain structures of perception and reorganizes spatial conception again and again. Earlier perceptions are continuously revised, not being simply rejected when the child learns more about the world, but remaining effective in a thoroughly transformed way. According to Piaget, the topological drawings of his experimental subjects should be considered traces of surviving sensory experiences that refer back to the formation of sensori-motor perception in the first two years of the infant's life. Therefore he emphasizes that children's drawings should not be regarded as immediate inscriptions of spatial perceptions. Instead he considers them to be agents reconstructing structures of spatial perception that have already been developing since the sensori-motor phase.<sup>lxvi</sup>

What is most significant about this passage, is the observation that 'earlier perceptions are continuously revised, not being simply rejected when the child learns more about the world, but remaining effective in a thoroughly transformed way', and that these are traces of 'surviving sensory experiences' from 'the first two years of the infant's life.' It will be this earliest interrelation with the world, which I shall return to in Chapter 4.

## *Time - Graphic Narration*



Fig.141. Simonne Luquet, French, 5.6 (Luquet collection). Woman in a shop. Graphic narration: successive type with repetition of elements (§83) <sup>lxvii</sup>

Figure 14. Graphic Narration

Luquet observes that children represent *time* in different ways during the stages of intellectual and visual realism. In intellectual realism they use what he calls the 'successive type' in which a sequence of events are included within a single image.<sup>23</sup> In the example above the woman is seen entering the shop, and the shop-keeper moves in response to her request to get the item she wants, goes to the cash desk and brings her parcel and the change back to her, after which she is drawn walking away from the shop with the parcel. The environment of the shop is a single image, in which the figures are repeated as they move about. In other drawings variations can occur where other elements are repeated in order to tell the story (an arrow flying through the air for example). Later, in the stage of 'visual

<sup>23</sup> This form of narrative can be seen in early Renaissance painting where a character or characters will be repeated at key points in the narrative through a continuous context. For example see: *The Tribute Money*, Masaccio, 1425, fresco, Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence; *Immaculate Conception and Birth of the Virgin Mary*, Domenico Ghirlandaio, 1485-90, Tornabuoni Chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence; *The Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi*, by Jacopino di Francesco 1325-30. As can be seen from the dates, the convention persisted from the mediaeval and early Renaissance period into the High Renaissance.

realism' the 'epinal type' develops, composed of several distinct images like the individual 'frames' of a movie, or in the 'storyboard' method of planning a filmic narrative.

The substitution of the successive type by the Epinal type corresponds to a *fragmentation of temporal continuity into discontinuous instants*, and hence the replacement of intellectual realism by visual realism. Thus in graphic narration as in the representation of static scenes, children as they grow up abandon one conception of space for another. (my emphasis) <sup>lxviii</sup>

In the original text, Luquet writes 'l'enfant, à mesure qu'il avance en âge, abandonne la première conception du réalisme pour la seconde.' This is very different from Costall's translation above, for it is their concept not of space alone, that changes, but of reality itself or rather, their concept of how to represent it ('réalisme' is not 'réalité'). What Luquet states here is that the child is working through a process which involves a changing concept of time and space, and what replaces their initial construct is another equally artificial construct, but one which is 'endorsed' so to speak, by the adult. The convention of perspective that characterizes visual realism, is the spatial equivalent of the Epinal type of graphic narration. The convention of perspective fixes both the objects of perception and the perceiver in space, just as the storyboard of the Epinal type fixes each (discontinuous) instant. As Bergson states in *Matière et Memoire*:

Homogeneous space and homogeneous time are then neither properties of things nor essential conditions of our faculty for knowing them: they express, in an abstract form, the double work of slidification and of division which we effect on the moving continuity of the real in order to obtain there a fulcrum for our action, in order to fix within it starting points for our operation, in short, to introduce into it real changes. They are the diagrammatic design of our eventual action upon matter.<sup>24</sup>

It is possible to argue that in the representation of time, the 'successive' type represents a sense of time that is one of a unified and fluid series of moments, which can be read less in terms of one moment at a time, but more as a whole. It is both successive *and* contemporaneous (in that all moments are present at the same time), rather than one moment replacing another and leaving it behind ('discontinuous instants'). It has fluidity and elasticity (rather as in the 'topological' representation of space) and *relativity*. Bergson is at

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<sup>24</sup> Bergson. *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margaret Paul and W.Scott Palmer. New York: Dover 2004, 280. It is because we mistakenly take our constructions to be the actual properties of space and time that we effect a discontinuity between matter and spirit, body and mind. See pp 280 - 285, after which he returns to the nature of perception itself in which for Bergson, space and time, matter and memory are united: 'In concrete perception memory intervenes, and the subjectivity of sensible qualities is due precisely to the fact that our consciousness, that begins by being only memory, prolongs a plurality of moments into each other, contracting them into a single intuition.' 292

pains to elucidate that however we attempt to conceive Time, we inevitably impose a structure or form upon it which is not adequate to fully grasp it.<sup>25</sup>

A representation of time such as that in Figure 11 could be claimed to be as valid a representation as the 'Epinal' type, or 'storyboard', made up of distinct and separate images. Indeed such a form of representation is more fluid, and elastic, but also most importantly, it represents an entire sequence, a whole, in which things (whether in time or space) are placed *in relation to one another*, rather than as distinct and separate from one another.

The 'mobilité d'esprit' that is so characteristic of the child's way of thinking is apparent in their concept of both time and space, yet nevertheless with the capacity to remember with precise detail 'the mignonette seeds about to grow' even though these had been planted eight months earlier'<sup>lxix</sup>

Children's drawing, and specifically the forms of representation in intellectual realism, had a considerable influence on twentieth century artists, albeit in an imitative form.<sup>26</sup> Wittman's paper points out what Luquet realised, although in a different way, that children even at a very early stage are engaged in a 'real' exploration of the world and exploring ways in which to represent it as accurately as they can, and as Luquet emphasizes, in a way that is equally valid to other forms of representation.

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<sup>25</sup> 'In reality there is no one rhythm of duration; it is possible to imagine many different rhythms which, slower or faster, measure the degree of tension or relaxation of different kinds of consciousness, and thereby fix their respective places in the scale of being'. Bergson. *Matter and Memory* 275

<sup>26</sup> See the fascinating collection of children's and artists' works in Fineberg, J. *The Innocent Eye: Children's Art and the Modern Artist* New Jersey: Princeton University Press 1998.



### ***Summary of Luquet's Account of Process***

In order to get to the point where the child can be said to have *an intention* it was necessary to examine the nature of the child's 'attention' to the world around them, and the way they become fascinated by particular things. In the Husserlian sense, it can be claimed that in itself attention is 'intentional' in that the object is seen *as* something. The often obsessive nature of attentive perception Luquet identifies as 'predilection', (that is observed in both the adult artist and the child) appears to be somewhat different from other forms of attention and 'attentive perception' and what this difference might be will be examined in Chapter 4.

In addition to this propensity to be attracted to certain types of thing, the influence of the environment of the child, and the nature of the life their family leads, has a significant influence on the kinds of things that are selected. Luquet puts this relation between the environment of the child and the kind of things they are stimulated to draw, as a 'proposal', and he is careful to accentuate that they 'propose' rather than 'impose'. As I mentioned earlier this is also both an accurate and an insightful way of putting the relation between the adult artist and the things they respond to in the world around them.

Prior to the beginnings of intention, I have pointed out that there are some parts of Luquet's account that require further examination: gesture; repetition; and imitation, with the role of gesture being a key factor in the production of marks which the child perceives as having a resemblance to something. I suggested that in this respect it could be said, to carry over Luquet's own term, that the *drawing* 'proposes' an idea of something to the child. This is what Luquet defined as 'fortuitous realism'. Once this is established and the child begins to look for things, or recognise more things in the drawings they make, they then begin to set out on the act of drawing with an idea to draw something in particular.

Once it is observed that the child has an intention to draw a particular thing, Luquet introduces the concept of the 'internal model' which 'is a refraction of the object to be drawn through the mind of the child, *a creative, though spontaneous reconstruction arising from an extremely complex process of elaboration.*'(my italics)<sup>lxx</sup> I pointed out that this aspect of Luquet's theory is problematic in the sense that the 'internal model' could be conceived of as a form of representation, that supplants the actual perception, and it has been suggested might be compared to the concept of the 'intentional object' in phenomenology. As Husserl himself warned, the danger of thinking of the intentional object as a representation is that it results in an infinite regression, and it has to be differentiated therefore from such a concept. I pointed out that this is a problematic area that will be returned to in later chapters, but in the situation in which the child is making a drawing, it should be seen as a

construct that does not in any way replace the original percept, but is more one which brings together a number of percepts or *abschattungen* in a unified whole. It is therefore functioning in a similar way, but it is not the same. The 'type' develops out of this 'mental representation' and each child will have their own construction, for a figure or a house for example, which they will often 'conserve' over a period of time. There is both an economy and a form of classification evident in this characteristic of children's drawings at this stage: objects will be grouped together which have similar forms, and the individual object or subject will be distinguished by additional details he defines as 'exemplarité', and which Freeman translated as 'criterial details'.<sup>lxxi</sup>

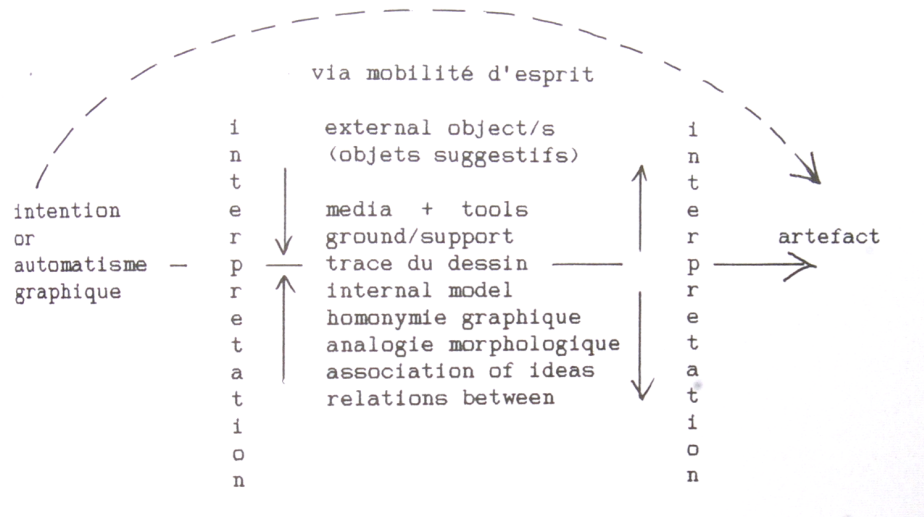
This has to be differentiated from 'exemplification', a form of representation which refers to qualities of an object of representation that are not necessarily visual; a song for example, or is not a solid physical object, as in the case of movement. This form of representation appears not to be recognised by Luquet, whose account is dominated by a mimetic model of representation, or to be more precise and fair to Luquet, it is dominated by the representation of visible objects. It is perhaps his recognition of the veracity of the child's depiction of space in intellectual realism, and its equal validity as a form to those constructions based on perspective, which makes this somewhat surprising.

Throughout these early stages of 'fortuitous' and 'intellectual realism' there is observed a fluid interchangeability of form and intention which facilitates the child's interpretation of their drawing or their gestures (*mobilité d'esprit*). Interpretation is a key element throughout the process from the very first beginnings of the child's experimentation with mark-making and construction, through to the most elaborate forms of process in the later stages of intellectual realism. The intention will adapt to that which is suggested by the marks they make if the marks are better interpreted as something else, or if there is a recognition of a connection between things of the kind he defines as '*analogie de rôle*', or a recognition of resemblance through '*analogie morphologique*' or '*honymie graphique*'. The sense of analogy, Luquet claimed, is inbuilt and 'serves as the basis of generalisation and imagination, both of which are indispensable for thought and action'. This is another area of critical importance to the thesis which will be returned to in terms of the nature of intuition and 'categorical intuition' in particular.

As I have already pointed out, the physical and social environment is influential throughout the process in that it may 'propose' an idea for a drawing to the child, but it is important to add that so also can the recollections and associations that are triggered by the events and objects around her. 'Past and present are linked to one another by the association of ideas, which, as we have seen, constantly intervenes in drawings from the earliest age.'<sup>lxxii</sup>

Luquet recognised that the child's representation of space during the stage of intellectual realism is equally valid to those based on the conventions of perspective, and Wittman's paper on Piaget's findings reinforces his view that the child, far from making fundamental mistakes in their awkward attempts to make sense of the world graphically, are making some essential and fundamental discoveries not just about the world, but about the nature of representation itself. As Wittman points out, 'according to Piaget, the topological drawings of his experimental subjects should be considered traces of surviving sensory experiences that refer back to the formation of sensori-motor perception in the first two years of the infant's life.'<sup>lxxiii</sup> However not only are such representations of value in this respect, (and this early period will become most important in the further analysis of perception in Chapters 3 and 4) but most importantly it could be claimed they are a more accurate representation. I referred to Bergson's examination of concepts of perception, of time and space, of duration, and extension in *Matière et Memoire* in order to point out certain similarities between the alternative forms of representation of space, of movement, and of time in intellectual realism and those posited by Bergson. Both are characterized by elasticity, flexibility, relativity, and include *relations between things as a whole*.

It is necessary in the next chapter to look at the limitations of Luquet's model in order to construct a model that can include a wider range of types of process, media, and objects of representation. I have pointed out that whilst Luquet refers to the importance of gesture, repetition and imitation, he does not examine these in depth. He also assumed the objects of representation to be visible material objects, albeit emphasizing that the space they inhabit can be legitimately represented by means other than those based on the conventions of perspective. I have referred to alternative forms of representation in which the qualities of an object, or of a song for example, may be represented through 'exemplification' rather than a mimetic form. However there are further limitations in the types of activities that are included in Luquet's model. His book is about drawing, in the most traditional sense, it being the production of line through the use of a pencil or pen on a two-dimensional surface. In his chapter on colour, the use of paint is not distinguished as having other characteristics which come from the medium itself. The paper the children draw on is not considered in terms of its shape or dimensions, its qualities of surface or absorbency. The paper is 'removed' in the sense that it is not shown: we see only the printed copy of the drawing. There are no drawings that are shown on any other kind of surface, on already extant images or three-dimensional forms. Neither are there drawings which appear to be abstract in content, or which explore pattern for its own sake.



note: the objects of representation (objets suggestifs) are not necessarily material or visual

Figure 15.

As I pointed out earlier, this initial extended model that I devised based on Luquet for the Masters thesis, should really have an additional arrow which travels around full circle to demonstrate the repetitious, cyclical nature of automatism. An important change to the first diagram on page 23, is that *drawing* has been replaced with *artefact*.

However I also pointed out that it is still inadequate in that not only does it start from *intention* it implies that the *association of ideas*, which includes the different forms of analogy (*homonymie graphique*, *analogie morphologique*, as well as, although missing here, *analogie de rôle*) occur *after* the intention, whereas, together with *objets suggestifs*, they should be understood *as part of intention*, or *perhaps forms of intention*: for in Chapter 1, on 'Intention', he identifies four factors which enter into it, all of which have been included in this chapter's examination of Luquet's theory (*predilection*, *objets suggestifs*, *association of ideas*, and *automatisme graphique*).

In order to construct a fuller model of process it is necessary to include other kinds of materials and methods that children employ, and a wider set of behaviours or rather 'performative acts' which accompany their processes of making, which will be examined through a number of case studies and examples in the second part of the next chapter.

However before that, in Part 1, it is essential to examine some of the ways in which the *process of making* has been understood, altered, and adapted by artists particularly over the course of the 20th Century, but also referring to certain examples prior to the end of the 19th Century: it is essential to revise the notion of *process* to include the developments that have taken place in order to situate these added dimensions within the context of contemporary fine art practice. It is impossible within the constraints of the thesis to enter into a full historical account of the changes, nor is it necessary. I shall instead refer to the works of particular artists and movements, which illustrate approaches to process that relate to the examples and case studies that are included in the second part of the chapter.

In Part 2 of the next chapter therefore, having established a fuller account of what I am referring to by the term *process*, I shall seek to expand Luquet's model of process through an examination of those elements that were insufficiently broad in scope (*objects of representation; gesture and drawing*) or were alluded to, but not examined in depth (*communication*). Others were not included for consideration by him at all: *ground and context; materials and methods; games, transgression and the other; strategies and performance*. These will be discussed in relation to examples and observations of children from the earliest stages of making, through the stages of 'fortuitous' and 'intellectual realism'.

The first two, (*objects of representation; gesture and drawing*) are necessarily included in Luquet's study but in a way which as has been pointed out, is limited. The remainder are not considered by Luquet in the way that I shall propose they need to be, but it is important to note that Luquet is unique in terms of the depth of his observations on the social context of the child's drawings, and strategies they use in relation to the intended recipient of a drawing. He also gives a great deal of evidence of the communication that occurs between him and the children, or the children and others, over their drawings.

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- <sup>i</sup> www.luquet-archives.univ-paris1.fr *Georges-Henri Luquet Archive*, Université Paris-Sorbonne.
- <sup>ii</sup> Parot F., (2000) Université Paris V, 'Psychology in the Human Sciences in France, 1920c - 1940: Ignace Meyerson's Historical Psychology' *History of Psychology* Vol.3.No.2, pp.104 - 121.
- <sup>iii</sup> Brassac C., (2003) 'Lev, Ignace, Jerome et les autres.....vers une perspective constructiviste en psychologie interactioniste' in *Technologies, Ideologies et Pratiques ; revue d'anthropologie des connaissances* Vol.xv No.1, pp.195 - 214.
- <sup>iv</sup> Brassac C., (2003). pp.195 - 214
- <sup>v</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001) *Children's Drawings*( '*Le Dessin Enfantin*') trans. Alan Costall, London, New York: Free Association Books, p.79.
- <sup>vi</sup> Luquet G-H.,(2001) *Children's Drawings* p. 218.
- <sup>vii</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001) *Children's Drawings* §92, p.148.
- <sup>viii</sup> Sully J., (1895)'*Studies of Childhood*' UK: Free Association Books (2000)p.21.
- <sup>ix</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001) *Children's Drawings*( '*Le Dessin Enfantin*') trans. Alan Costall, London, New York: Free Association Books, p.148.
- <sup>x</sup> Luquet G-H.,(2001) *Children's Drawings* 2001.p.156
- <sup>xi</sup> Matthews J., (1999) *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence: The Construction of Meaning* London: RoutledgeFalmer. p.19.
- <sup>xii</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001) *Children's Drawings* ( '*Le Dessin Enfantin*') trans. Alan Costall, London, New York: Free Association Books p.154.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Merleau-Ponty M.,(1960), *Primacy of Perception* 'The Child's Relations with Others' trans. William Cobb, Ed. James M.Edie (1964) Northwestern University Press 96 - 155.
- <sup>xiv</sup> West V.,(1989) '*An Enquiry into Process and Representation in the Visual Works of Young Children*' a dissertation in part fulfilment of M.A. in Art Education, Birmingham Polytechnic p. 7.
- <sup>xv</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001)*Children's Drawings*( '*Le Dessin Enfantin*') trans. Alan Costall, London, New York: Free Association Books 18,§15
- <sup>xvi</sup> Luquet G\_H., (2001) *Children's Drawings*, p.57.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Luquet G\_H., (2001) *Children's Drawings*,p.13.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Luquet G\_H., (2001) *Children's Drawings* p.88, § 60.
- <sup>xix</sup> Luquet G\_H., (2001) *Children's Drawings* p.86, §58.
- <sup>xx</sup> Luquet G\_H., (2001) *Children's Drawings* p.86,§58.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Luquet G\_H., (2001) *Children's Drawings* p.87,§58.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Luquet G\_H., (2001) *Children's Drawings* p.9.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Arnheim R.,(mcmx) *Art and Visual Perception* ,London: Faber & Faber.136
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Goodman N.,(1981) *Languages of Art* Brighton:Harvester Press. II,3.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Matthews J., (1999) *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence: The Construction of Meaning* London: RoutledgeFalmer. p.19
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001)*Children's Drawings*( '*Le Dessin Enfantin*') trans. Alan Costall, London, New York: Free Association Books, p.8, §5.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001)*Children's Drawings* p.9, §6. The full passage is as follows: ' The intention to draw a certain object is the extension and manifestation of the child's mental representation: the object depicted is that which, in the mind of the artist, has momentarily come to take an exclusive or preponderant position.'
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Husserl E., (1983) *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, (trans.) Kersten F., pp.211-35. The Hague: Nijhoff. From Moran D., and Mooney T.,(eds) (2002) *The Phenomenology Reader*, London & New York: Routledge, p.143.
- <sup>xxix</sup> Bergson H.,(2004) *Matter and Memory*, (trans.)Paul N.M. & Scott Palmer W. New York: Dover p.34 (his italics)
- <sup>xxx</sup> Bergson H.,(2004) pp.30-31.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Bergson H.,(2004) p.75.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Bergson H.,(2004) pp.42-43.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Bergson H.,(2004) p.44.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001)*Children's Drawings* ('*Le Dessin Enfantin*.' ) Costall A., (trans.)London, New York: Free Association Books. p.9, §8
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001)*Children's Drawings* p.10, §8.
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001)*Children's Drawings* p.55, §44.
- <sup>xxxvii</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001)*Children's Drawings* p.47, §34.

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- xxxviii Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001. 47-48, §35
- xxxix Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001. 44
- xl Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001. §90
- xli Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001. §91
- xlj Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001. §91
- xljii E.Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, 1983, trans. F. Kersten from 'Noesis and Noema' pp 211 - 35, The Hague: Nijhoff. §90
- xliv E.Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology*. 1983. §90
- xlv Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* ('*Le Dessin Enfantin*') Costall trans. London, New York: Free Association Books 2001.p.18, §15
- xlvi Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001.p.19, §15
- xlvi Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001.p. 20, §16
- xlvi Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001. §46
- xlvi Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001.p.13, §11
- l Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001.p.153, §92
- li Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001.p.152, §92
- lii Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001.p.153, §92. See also analogical transfer §31-32.
- lii G.H.Luquet *Le Dessin Enfantin*, Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1977. 'Elle ne produira tous ses heureux effets qu'en se laissant discipliner, l'esprit devra acquérir de la circonspection: mais sans elle, il resterait inerte et incapable de progrès.' 188
- liv Martin Heidegger *Being and Time*, Trans.Macquarrie & Robinson, Oxford UK Cambridge USA: Blackwell 1962 p 98, footnote 2.
- lv Georges-Henri Luquet, *Children's Drawings* (*Le Dessin Enfantin*), Costall trans. London, New York: Free Association Books 2001 10, §8
- lvi Henri Bergson *Matter and Memory*' New York:Dover 2004. 68
- lvii Henri Bergson *Matter and Memory*' 2004. p70
- lviii Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* ('*Le Dessin Enfantin*') Costall trans. London, New York: Free Association Books 2001, §8, 10.
- lix Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings*, 2001. §10, 13.
- lx Lev Vygotsky, *Mind in Society*, 1978, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., London
- lxi John Mathews *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning*, London: Falmer Press 1999. 98. See also Chapter 2, Part 1(of this thesis), 'Strategies and Performance' p.151
- lxii Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* ('*Le Dessin Enfantin*') Costall trans. London, New York: Free Association Books 2001, xv.
- lxiii Georges-Henri Luquet *Children's Drawings* 2001, 146
- lxiv G.H.Luquet *Le Dessin Enfantin*, Paris: Niestlé & Delachaux. 1984. See pages 135 - 148.
- lxv G.H.Luquet *Le Dessin Enfantin*. 1984, 144
- lxvi Barbara Wittmann 'Jean Piaget and the Child's Spontaneous Geometry' in 'A Study of Children's Drawings as Psychological Instruments': part of the project *Knowledge in the Making: Drawing and Writing as Research Techniques* based at the MPIWG in Berlin and the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence, Italy. This information is from the project's website and a report on the project in MaxPlanckResearch, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. Berlin: January 2010
- lxvii G-H Luquet *Children's Drawing* (*Le Dessin Enfantin*) trans. Costall , London, New York: Free Association Books 2001, 133.
- lxviii G-H Luquet *Children's Drawing* 2001. 140
- lxix G-H Luquet *Children's Drawing* 2001. 10
- lxx G-H Luquet *Children's Drawing* 2001 §34
- lxxi Norman Freeman, 'Process and Product in Children's Drawing' in *Perception* 1972, Vol.1
- lxxii G-H Luquet *Le Dessin Enfantin* trans. Costall , London, New York: Free Association Books 2001 p.153
- lxxiii Barbara Wittmann, 'Jean Piaget and the Child's Spontaneous Geometry', MaxPlanckResearch, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. Berlin: January 2010
- lxxiv V. West 'An Enquiry into Process and Representation in the Visual Works of Young Children' a dissertation in part fulfilment of M.A. in Art Education, 1989, Birmingham Polytechnic. See first diagram p. 19.

## CHAPTER 2



## PART I - *PROCESS*

### *Introduction*

The purpose of this chapter is to critically examine and extend the model of the making process as described by Luquet. First of all however, it is important to describe certain approaches to process that have developed within contemporary Fine Art practice in which the creative process of the child needs to be situated. I shall refer to the works of particular artists and movements, which illustrate approaches that are of particular relevance to the examples and case studies of children's work examined in the second part of the chapter: for example the use of found materials, appropriation, and automatism. Such ways of working are still not commonly included in the methodologies used by psychology in the study of children's art. It has been in the development of psychoanalysis, and particularly in the initiation of play as a means of working with children by Melanie Klein, that a fuller range of symbolic activity has been recognised and made use of, albeit as an 'instrument' to borrow Witkin's term, in the service of analysis. Christopher Green in his fascinating chapter on 'Magicians' (with the sub-heading 'Picasso the sorcerer, Miro the monstrous child') in *Picasso, Architecture and Vertigo*, considers the coincidental as well as direct relations between Picasso, Miró, Luquet, Bataille, Freud and Klein:

Most striking of all, however, is the fact that Miró's development of drawing as play within the frame of his sketchbook practice, along with the highly sexualized, often violent symbolization that emerged in them, occurred at exactly the moment of the development of play technique and child analysis in Melanie Klein's psychoanalytic work. In different practices (artistic and psychoanalytic), in different places, with no contact between them, the agenda for the exploration of child sexuality set out by Freud in *Three Essays* and the *Little Hans* case-history is seen to relate to two clearly distinct individual developments (artistic and psychoanalytic), but two separate developments that can seem to reinforce each other because of the closeness of the parallels between them.<sup>i</sup>

Miró adopted a working process that involved playing with mark-making in a way which referred directly to Luquet's account of the ways in which children develop their drawings through the phase of intellectual realism. This 'adoption' could be said to be a form of 'appropriation', the significance of which will be examined in this and later chapters, as well as the meaning of the term 'appropriation' itself.

Certain of the similarities and differences between the process of the child and the adult artist are set out in the Conclusion of the thesis, but the influence of Klein and the interpretation of her work by Winnicott, will be referred to in the first area that I pay attention to in the expansion of Luquet's model in the second part of the chapter: *Objects of Representation*.

As has been stated at the end of the last chapter, I shall then examine the relation between *Gesture and Drawing*, as well as the definition of drawing itself. *Ground and Context* are examined after this, and the gathering together or appropriation of objects are then examined as a form of *Communication*. Other elements also not included for consideration by Luquet, are brought together under the following headings: *Games, Transgression and the Other*, and *Materials and Methods*.

Finally, whilst *strategies* are alluded to by Luquet (especially in relation to the different forms of drawing that are used by children for different people), in *Strategies and Performance* I shall use the term to refer to 'ways of going about' the process, including the range of acts that attend or are part of it.

In laying out the chapter as I have, the elements that enter into the process have to be separated out, and in examining the nature of the objects of representation, it is important to bear in mind that the *materials and methods*, and *ground and context*, *communication*, *transgression and the other*, and *strategies and performance* will all play their part, with some (*materials and methods*, *ground and context*) having a fundamental role.

As has been stated above, the first two elements are included in the model devised by Luquet (although not designated in this way) but will be examined more closely in terms of the developments in fine art that have taken place since Luquet wrote his first thesis on the drawings of Simonne : *objects of representation*; *gesture and drawing*.

### *The Ascendancy of Process in Practice*

The word 'process' can be used as both a noun and a verb; it can identify something as a whole, as well as that which brings the thing about.<sup>1</sup> It can imply a fixed and controlled sequence of acts or occurrences, as in the case in manufacturing or an industrial process (for example the processing of photographic film, welding, firing a pot, printing). It can become part of the making process of the child, (but usually only with adult guidance) and can be a vital part of the making process of the adult artist. In the first chapter, I examined the term as used by Luquet (see Luquet and Process Chapter 1, p.18) and made clear certain distinctions between the use of the term as it is used in manufacturing for example, and the way it is used in contemporary fine art practice, the former normally being a mechanical process with a predictable outcome, whilst the latter is an organic and variable set of actions involved in the making of an artwork which may sometimes be predictable but is often planned in such a way that it is not. Whilst the term 'methodology' refers to something less specific and more varied than 'processing' (in the industrial sense of the term), it nevertheless implies that a certain sequence will be followed once the method has been decided upon. In this respect it is possible to say that there are particular methods of printmaking, or painting, or conducting experiments. Methods can be changed, and can be invented, but one of the important characteristics of a method, as a rule, is that it is repeatable. As stated in Chapter 1, a *strategy* is the way in which the artist goes about using a method, and the sequence of decisions and types of decision that are made during the making process. A strategy is holistic in that it sets out a plan of action, however much it may be altered during the process, which aims to see the plan through. It can absorb and often will in the cases I shall be looking at, depend critically upon spontaneous actions that cannot be planned, and rely on a readiness to change and a responsiveness to the moment, and to the materials. In terms of time, it also operates over a much longer time scale, and for the contemporary adult artist may include a series of actions that are not often considered to be part of the process (funding applications, material specifications, written proposals, meetings)<sup>2</sup> yet are essential to it. A method or methods alternatively, are included as part of the process: a form of printing for example; a way of gathering material; or particular types of painting. In the case of the child it will often be experimental and rudimentary, and they often invent their own methods, which they then modify as they see others working, or they become more skilled.

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<sup>1</sup> The sense used in Law of 'due process' implies a necessary sequence of actions, and although a

<sup>2</sup> one of the most fascinating documents about this aspect of making can be seen in the film 'Running Fence' about the project by Christo & Jeanne-Claude, by Albert & David Maysles 1978. See also 'Marina Abramovitch: The Artist is Present', dir Matthew Akers & Jeff Dupre 2012.

Methods are inextricably bound up with materials, in that the nature of the material will determine to a considerable degree what it is possible to do with it. They are however not fixed, for artists are always experimenting with different ways of doing things, whilst also refining technical methods that may derive from earlier centuries: fresco, gesso, encaustic, and tempera painting are all methods which developed from Roman times and are still used by artists today, together with 21st Century digital imagery and three-dimensional printing. The relation between the artist and the medium or media they choose to work with is often seriously underestimated or insufficiently taken into account in the way in which works are perceived, critiqued, interpreted or analyzed. In section 53 of *Art and its Objects*, Wollheim is concerned to emphasize the relation of the artist to their medium, quoting a passage from a letter written by Mozart to his father which illustrates his pushing of the boundaries of the musical conventions of the time and how far it may be possible to take them, yet at the same time working with the structure of music itself.<sup>ii</sup> Whilst the artists shape the forms, they do not conjure them out of nothing: 'the artist is operating inside a continuing activity or enterprise, and this enterprise has its own repertoire, imposes its own stringencies, offers its own opportunities, and thereby provides occasions, inconceivable outside it, for invention and audacity.'<sup>iii</sup>

He then goes on directly to compare this with the remarkable amount that has been learned from observing the play of children, which has been possible 'only because of the inherent structure that games possess, and that the child twists and turns to his own needs. There is we say, a 'life of forms in play'.<sup>iv</sup> Certain kinds of play have their own time and structure, their own *forms* in the sense of an overall structure, and he refers to the interpretation of play in psychoanalytic writing. This will be referred to again when discussing the examples that follow, but at this point it is important to say that the observations that attend these examples, and the examples themselves are not ones that fit easily, and some not at all, into the 'forms' that are those commonly recognised.

Therefore, to summarise, whilst an artist or child will find ways of making things and often repeat them, they also evolve and vary what they do, and therefore the term 'process' is used to signify this fuller more varied and sometimes unpredictable series of actions and their effects. It is what is usually meant by the phrase 'the creative process'. It is this meaning that I wish to apply to *process* and its relation the life of the child, as they develop and grow within it.

Certain artists (including myself) have for some time, or from time to time, engaged others in the 'manufacture' of their work once they have determined upon its 'design'. The studios of Titian, and Rubens 'manufactured' the production of many works, which required the hand of the 'master' only to create certain effects, or to work on the heads and hands of the figures

once the ground and main areas were completed. In these cases it is the drawing or design process prior to the stage of the making of the 'to be finished' work that offers the opportunity to see the ideas develop and change. The term 'pentimenti' refers to the traces of line or form that can be seen underlying a finished painting which indicate a change of mind about the position of an element in the painting, or the repeated attempts in a drawing to fix with precision the contour of a leg. The position of 'pentimenti' and their ascendancy from something that is covered over and to be hidden, to that aspect of a work that is considered to be at least as informative as the rest, reveals both a fundamental shift in the position the artist takes up in relation to the world, and our perception of it. Pentimenti are used for both the testing out of possible positions or arrangements of imaginary forms, as well as in order to ascertain with precision where an edge may be relative to others in an objective study from observation.

The multiplicity of marks that Cezanne recognised followed as a consequence of the slightest change of position in relation to a subject of objective study for example, became the basis of Cubism and its challenge to the convention and dominance of perspective. There is a threefold transformation here that involves firstly a challenging of the convention of a fixed viewpoint required by a perspectival representation of space; secondly the realisation of a fuller perceptual 'truth' (and it is important to note that it is one of doubt rather than certainty, as there are alternative 'truths' that are all equally valid); and thirdly, that in the *process* of looking, in order to make a representation, the relations between things change. They change not only because phenomena are continually in flux, but also because in the process of drawing Cezanne would have found (as anyone who draws does) that you make assumptions, or guesses about the relations between objects that are mistaken, and they have to be changed. Instead of correcting them and creating an illusion of accuracy and stilled perfection, or 'right' relations, Cezanne included those alternative possibilities as part of the work.

Cezanne opened up the process of seeing through setting down, or drawing out, the many 'right' lines that can be used to represent an object in relation to other objects, rather than just one, depending upon the viewpoint. For him it was necessary to show them, and not conceal them. Not only necessary, but absolutely necessary not to pretend otherwise. The marks that denote have become provisional not only because this was all Cezanne could manage to be sure of, but because this is all anyone can be sure of: the work becomes a record of an experience (of seeing and making) that is ongoing, mutable and constantly in need of revision. As a consequence from the beginning of the 20th century on, the unfinished sketch or the incomplete work becomes an almost more significant and telling work than the finished, polished and perfectly executed one. Retrospectively as a consequence,

Michelangelo's unfinished 'Slaves' become as highly valued as one of his *Pieta* or his highly celebrated *David*; and Leonardo's cartoons become celebrated at least as much as the *Mona Lisa*.<sup>3</sup>

Another 'component' so to speak of this aspect of the making process, is the question of authorship, and the role and stature that is awarded to the hand of the artist, and therefore to the trace of it. The 'pentimenti' were seen as evidence of the artist's decision-making *and* provided authenticity of attribution. That the artist has or has not changed the idea during the course of the making of the work is always fascinating for those interested in the development of an artist's ideas, and new technologies have made it possible now to uncover a painting layer by layer, to reveal the process in precise detail. It also contributes to the sense of the artist's presence, heightened immeasurably by the notion of the artist as 'genius': the mark of the pencil, conté, brush, or chisel becomes an imprint or act of a very particular, valued and singularly gifted individual. Even now despite the many precedents throughout the 20th Century (Riley, Oldenberg, Sherman, Koons, Quinn, Hirst to name only a few) the execution or manufacture by others than the artist of a work that is seen as belonging within the context of Fine Art is seen as suspicious.

The very opposite of the notion of the artist as 'genius' is the notion of the artist as a 'monstrous child', a 'shaman' or 'magician':

As I have shown especially in an essay published in 1998, many of the so-called 'dream paintings' produced by Miró between 1924 and 1927....as well as his 'anti-paintings' of 1930, invoke the idea given currency from 1913 by the French child psychologist G-H.Luquet, that each child discovers representation for itself by the purposeless making of marks.....Miró not only used mark-making in his sketchbooks to act out that moment for himself (reproducing it in painting); he also, as I have shown in my 1998 essay, ranged through the whole gamut of techniques analyzed by Luquet as characteristic of child drawing in its development after the initial discovery phase.<sup>v</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> 'The most striking thing about many of the drawings of the past and of other cultures is how 'modern' they look. I believe this is because the qualities we have come to value most highly in art in the twentieth century have always been present in art, but usually in the past have characterized only modest and 'secondary' work; that is, drawings. These characteristics include spontaneity, creative speculation, experimentation, directness, simplicity, abbreviation, expressiveness, immediacy, personal vision, technical diversity, modesty of means, rawness, fragmentation, discontinuity, unfinishedness, and open-endedness. These have always been the characteristics of drawing' (Michael Craig-Martin *Drawing the Line*, London: The South Bank Centre 1995, p10). Craig-Martin follows these two paragraphs with: 'The spontaneous, personal, and undogmatic qualities of drawing have been highly appropriate models for art in a century characterised by the fragmentation of both the systems of belief and the language of expression. In a way unique to our times, artists today must discover, select, and develop for themselves the forms of expression appropriate to their needs and abilities'.

Here it is possible to say that the artist has 'appropriated' the way of going about the making of imagery (in other words, the apparent *process*) from the child despite as Green points out immediately before the above quote: 'Little Paolo Picasso's efforts and those of children everywhere became a model to be emulated, however difficult any real regression to the condition of the infant might be.'

In *Art and its Objects*, Wollheim distinguishes between the 'aesthetic attitude' and the work of art that has been produced *as* a work of art. The 'aesthetic attitude' can treat objects *not* made as works of art, *as if they are* works of art, and he cites as a vivid example, the 'wholesale transfer of primitive artefacts from ethnographical collections, where they had hitherto been housed, to museums of fine art, where it was now thought, they were more appropriately located.'<sup>vi</sup> However what Wollheim does not say is that the transfer involved not only an 'attitude' which brought these artefacts into the domain of art, but was also used by artists at the time (Picasso, Gauguin, Kirschner, Nolde, Gaudier-Brzeska) as a fundamental critique through the nature of their *practice* which appropriated their forms as a means of communicating a more fundamental, charged, vital, and often brutal relation with the world which directly challenged what they perceived as the hypocrisy and pretensions of the bourgeois values of the time. This is best articulated by one of the founders of the Dada movement, Richard Huelsenbeck, in 1920:

It was that absolute audacity which brought dadaism so close to existentialism in those days, the fantastic heroism of a group fighting it out with symbols; propagating war, but not war as commonly understood. Rather it was a better fight, the revolt against conventionalism, against a sated middle class crammed full of victorian half-values, the war against spiritual death, against satiety, against the liberalism of intellectuals, against good people, against rabbit-fanciers in philosophy, against the members of church-women's organisations. In New York, a shrewd theologian, Professor Tillich, wrote a book entitled "The Audacity of Being". Simple existence, the restitution of the rights of instincts, the praise of sexuality, the adoration of strength, even (to my shame I must admit it) the adoration of brute force from Rimbaud to Mickey Spillane, brutality as shown in the films of Hitchcock - all that, horrible dictu, was part of our programme. A wild tangle of contradictions and paradoxes which was, however, held together by its very discrepancy. It was that two-sided, perhaps even double-tongued existence taken from life itself, which despises ideals. It was dadaism in its existentialist version.<sup>vii</sup>

The introduction of these 'primitive' objects into the galleries in Paris, and the influence they exercised over artists at the beginning of the 20th Century and its effect upon 20th Century art became the precedent for a series of what could be called 'appropriations', in which more and more 'objects' (in both material and philosophical senses), and *ways of going about making* art, were adopted from one sphere hitherto demarcated as 'not art' to the sphere

which was 'art'.<sup>4</sup> The use of collage and 'bricolage', in other words, the construction of imagery and objects from collections of material 'appropriated' from other kinds of use or from 'everyday' life, began as early as 1879.<sup>5</sup> However the fullest developments occurred simultaneously from 1910 onwards in Paris, Italy and Russia, with Synthetic Cubism (Picasso, Braque, Gris,) , Constructivism ( Tatlin, Rosaova, Goncharov, Popova, Malevich), Futurism (Marinetti, Carra, Severini, Boccioni, Balla) and Dada, (Tzara, Huelsenbeck, Man Ray, Hannah Hoch, Heartfield, Grosz, Hausmann, Ernst, Sophie-Tauber Arp & Jean Arp, Duchamp).

It is highly significant that Luquet himself was instrumental in bringing so-called 'primitive' art to the attention of the French public through his publications: *L'Art et la Religion des Hommes Fossiles* (1926), *L'Art Neo-Caledonian* (1926) and *L'Art Primitif* (1930). Luquet made a number of significant parallels between the art of children, and specifically the stage of intellectual realism and primitive art in 'L'Art Primitif', which were contested by Bataille, principally through his drawing attention to the discrepancy between the astonishingly 'life-like' images of animals that had been discovered and those images, mainly sculptures, of the human form, that were as he termed them 'informe' a discrepancy Luquet does not acknowledge.<sup>viii</sup> Bataille observed wryly, that one would be forced to conclude that ' (the) first men who made what we call a work of art would have known nothing of primitive art.'<sup>ix</sup> This is a most important area, which will be returned to later in Part 2 of this chapter in the section on *Gesture and Drawing*, and also in the section on *Games, Transgression and the Other*.

It could be said that just as there is appropriation of more and more aspects of (external) *culture/s* into the making process, there is also more and more appropriation of (internal) *structures/states*. Through the acknowledgement and then the utilisation of for example 'automatic' writing and drawing in Dada and Surrealism, (Tzara, Breton, Michaux) and the inclusion of chance operations in the process of making work, (Duchamp, Breton, Man Ray) other aspects of experience, thought and feeling than those that are rational, composed, and controlled could enter the process. Perhaps rather than the term 'appropriation' it is better to use terms such as 'inclusion', or 'permission', when writing about the desire of artists to make use of kinds of experience, thoughts, feelings, and expression that had hitherto been

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<sup>4</sup> The appropriation of types of subject as well as methods of production that occurred in the 1960s during the 'Pop Art' movement which utilised the methods, scale and imagery of advertising is one example, just as the period of Impressionism was also a case of this kind, where the direct observation of life outside the studio hitherto considered 'inappropriate' and not 'worthy' as a subject (as opposed to 'history painting' for example), became symbolic of a rebellion against such limitations imposed by the academicism of the time. This characteristic of 'appropriation' could be said to be the defining link between all the avant-gardes of 20th Century Art.

<sup>5</sup> *The Little Fourteen -Year Old Dancer*, 1879 - 81 Edgar Degas, (a bronze figure to which is attached a tulle skirt, and a ribbon)



excluded. 'Appropriation' in the sense of 'making one's own' will be returned to, and its significance explored further in later chapters, and particularly in Chapter 4 in relation to what is meant by *Ereignis* in Heidegger's essay 'The Origin of the Work of Art' in *Poetry, Language, Thought*.<sup>x</sup> For the present it is important to note that for Heidegger the term signifies a great deal more than the 'adoption' or 'taking over' of something.

It is clear that Heidegger here is making use of the "own" meaning of "*eigen*" to read the sense of the verb *ereignen* as *to make one's own, to appropriate*. But instead of "appropriate" in the sense of one's appropriating something for oneself, for which the verb *sich (etwas) aneignen* is already available, Heidegger wants to speak of a process by which nothing "selfish" occurs, but rather by which the different members of the world are brought into belonging to and with one another and are helped to realize themselves and each other in realizing this belonging.<sup>xi</sup>

It was in certain of the case studies that are examined later in this chapter, that the 'bringing together' of things that 'belong to and with one another', was achieved in such a way that when I saw them, it raised questions in my mind about the level of awareness and understanding of a child of three and a half years, and of the nature of their consciousness.

The growing attention to the 'way of going about making' developed later to the extent that 'Process Art' became a term that defined an approach to Fine Art practice in Europe and America, which started during the 1960s and continues contemporaneously. Emphasizing the nature of the making of work, artists explored many new and unorthodox methods, materials, situations, contexts and purposes. It was anti-elitist, and aimed to re-integrate art and life, and remove art from the gallery into the environment and the social realm. It explored and promoted the use of poor materials, (*Arte Povera* in Italy) reclaimed, re-used and found materials, (often discarded), as well as industrial and ephemeral materials: sand, water, air, earth, salt, (Smithson) mud, latex (Hesse)<sup>6</sup>, beeswax, styrofoam (Benglis), felt, fat, (Beuys).

Whilst Minimalism in the 1960s sought to eliminate everything that was considered to be non-essential from the artwork,<sup>xii</sup> Carl Andre, Morris, Smithson, Boetti and others were including materials and processes that were indistinguishable from external industrial materials, and presenting them in ways that were indistinguishable from industrial objects (Andre's 'bricks', Morris' 'boxes'). For Smithson it was a means of regaining his autonomy, or at least fighting for it, and retaining control over his own processes, by using processes other

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<sup>6</sup> 'You must begin by making small things as that starts (the) cycle going. Doing begins things and it continues. It is always that way. As one piece leads into the next. As it was I never remember working on one thing. It always is in at least pairs and further ahead...doing perpetuates doing, and thinking' Eva Hesse, undated notebook entry from 'Studiowork' by Jenni Lomax, *File Note 47*, Camden Arts Centre, on the Exhibition 'Studiowork' December 2009-March 2010.

than those with which the critics were already well versed (although ironically the 'gallery culture' still dominated the dissemination of his work).

For too long the artist has been estranged from his own 'time'. Critics, by focusing on the 'art object', deprive the artist of any existence in the world of both mind and matter. The mental process of the artist, which takes *place* in time is disowned, so that a commodity value can be maintained by a system independent of the artist. Art, in this sense is considered 'timeless' or a product of 'no time at all'; this becomes a convenient way to exploit the artist out of his rightful claim to his temporal processes.<sup>xiii</sup>

Smithson's statement I think expressed the feeling of many artists at the time particularly in Europe and the United States but also in South America, that the art object was seen in isolation, as an item for trade separated off from the larger process of which it is a part and the life it inhabits. Parallel explorations began taking place into the inclusion of process to the extent of the making of ephemeral and 'provisional' works that, as in the *Happenings* of Kaprow and *Fluxus*, (which became an international affiliation of artists), used events or occurrences from real life or interventions into real life, as the basis for interactive works.<sup>7</sup>

Artists began later to use organic elements or chemical components, as well as processes such as freezing (Quinn), condensation, decomposition (Chadwick), growth (Nash), explosion and compression (Cornelia Parker). Other kinds of fabrication, forming and transforming materials than the traditional were explored: cutting, hanging, gathering, sorting, collating, as well as the use of industrial processes, including large-scale demolition and construction processes (Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*). Of particular importance is that often the process is unpredictable: the emphasis is on the creative journey, and not on the final outcome or product. It was and remains an approach that opposes the commodification of art.

I am speaking of a dialectics that seeks a world outside of cultural confinement. Also I am not interested in art works that suggest 'process' within the metaphysical limits of the neutral room. There is no freedom in that kind of behavioural game playing. The artist acting like a B.F. Skinner rat doing his 'tough' little tricks is something to be avoided. Confined process is no process at all. It would be better to disclose the confinement rather than make illusions of freedom.<sup>xiv</sup>

This attack by Smithson is appropriately savage: it points out the essential fallacy underlying both what is claimed by such 'tricks', and the claims of behaviourism and the methodology it

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<sup>7</sup> *Fluxus* was a term devised by the coordinator George Maciunas of what was claimed to be an 'attitude', rather than a 'group' or 'movement'. Maciunas, a Lithuanian refugee, architect, (*fluxhouse*) and graphic designer who studied with John Cage, became involved in the initiation and coordination of collaborative events and projects ('fluxkits', scores, publications, multiples) with an extraordinary number of artists, writers and musicians including Cage, Brecht, Beuys, Yoko Ono, Dick Higgins, Nam June Paik, La Monte Young, Rauschenberg, Morris, Cunningham, and Kaprow.

espoused. 'Confined process is no process at all' could not be a more apt rejoinder to the claims made by psychology about children's drawing on the basis of task-completion exercises. Celant, quoting Cage takes the principle even further, not only bringing art out of the gallery or concert hall, but into the way in which life is lived:

"Art comes", states Cage, "from a kind of experimental condition in which one experiments with living". To create art, then, one identifies with life and to exist takes on the meaning of re-inventing at every moment a new fantasy, pattern of behaviour, aestheticism, etc. of one's own life. What is important is not to justify it or to reflect it in the work or in the product, but to live it as a work.<sup>xv</sup>

Similarly, the *Fluxus* movement in central Europe rejected the separation of art and the 'academies' from the rest of life. Josef Beuys, Professor at Kunstacademie in Dusseldorf from 1961-72 'campaigned' for the need to create an art that was integral to the whole of society, with others as co-creators, and saw his seminars and lectures as 'live art', just as his *Coyote* and other 'performance' pieces were. I use the term 'performance' with caution because *Coyote* was also an experiment, a statement of solidarity (with the animal), and a metaphor (of America). The way 'process art' continues in contemporary practice, containing similar radical political implications can be seen in the work of Francis Alÿs<sup>8</sup> and Gabriel Orozco. Alÿs uses a wide range of strategies, media and methods (as does Orozco) and *walking* is at the centre of his practice and references the notion of the 'flâneur' (which will be alluded to later in this chapter).

A conference on the work of Eva Hesse at University College, London, convened by Jenni Lomax from Camden Arts Centre in February 2010 was introduced by Briony Fer as a way of thinking about new 'geographies' of art, and 'to think new 'constellations' or 'pivotal axes' regarding the art object. It was held to coincide with the exhibition of Hesse's 'Studiowork', at Camden Arts Centre 2009-March 2010. Connections were made between artists working in Turin (Boetti, Panatone), Rio de Janeiro (Oitikica) and New York (Lygia Clark, Hesse). The conference referenced the 'studio works' of Hesse, that have been seen by some as 'test pieces', and by others as works in their own right, and discussed the nature of their relation to the larger scale, more 'finished' works. Other speakers included Guy Brett, Mark Godfrey, (who curated the Tate Modern exhibition on Francis Alÿs, *A Story of Deception*) Mignon

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<sup>8</sup> In 2004, Alÿs walked along the armistice border, known as 'the green line', dribbling green paint behind him. Penciled on a map by Moshe Dayan at the end of the war between Israel and Jordan in 1948, it remained the border until The Six Day War in 1967, after which Israel occupied Palestinian territories east of the line. He did this at the time the separation fence was under construction. The full title of the work is *The Green Line (sometimes doing something poetic can become political and sometimes doing something political can become poetic)* 2004. Between 1999 and 2013 he has made a series of films of children's games, as well as animations, paintings, and film of himself running into tornados: *Tornado 2000-10*.

Nixon, David Batchelor, Margaret Iverson and Michael Astbury. When Jenni Lomax was responsible for education at the Whitechapel Gallery and first wrote about Hesse's work for the exhibition there in 1979, she told the conference she used terms such as 'looping, laying, sagging, lying, stretching - all *performative* words'. At the same time as Hesse, Louise Bourgeois was working with latex, making small 'sub-objects'. In 1964 there was a shift in her work from solidity to fluidity, from rigidity to pliability, from construction to casting. 'She evokes infantile, scatological and instinctive drives, and the negative force of these drives (a double negative); drives in the grip of anxiety and aggression' (Nixon). David Batchelor referred to Smithson's rejection of the gallery, ("the gallery came in for a lot of flack"), and the suspicion artists had of "the snare of craft, and the bondage of creativity"; and the studio too - "there was a move against the 'Francis Bacon type of studio - the relic of a particular kind of process". Studios are now much more varied and much more 'modern' Batchelor argued, and he himself uses a studio *as well as* working out in the city: "in practice it helps to have a very developed peripheral vision - the stuff in the corner overlooked can be more interesting than the stuff in the middle all puffed up." <sup>9</sup>

The interaction and appropriation that has occurred between art, its objects, and society, during the 20th Century is a huge area of study<sup>10</sup> extending well beyond the scope of this thesis. However, if we do not bring an awareness of context, and process, to include all the above in the way we observe what children make, we risk observing them from a viewpoint that bears no relation to contemporary art practice, and no relation to the cultures they inhabit. Most importantly, however we describe what the children did in the examples given in this thesis, whether we call it 'art' or 'creative play' or 'symbol-making activity', or simply, 'visual experimentation', what I wish to emphasize is the way in which it is a fundamental part of living. It could be claimed that for many of the artists named above, it is this kind of integration they seek.

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<sup>9</sup> This relates very directly to the discussion on the nature of Intuition in Chapter 3.

<sup>10</sup> See *Collage, Assemblage and the Found Object*, Diane Waldman, Phaidon, London 1992.

## PART 2 - *EXTENDING THE MODEL*

### INTRODUCTION

#### ***Context***

It is important to describe the situation in which this enquiry started. I had moved with my partner John Henzell, out of London to rent half a farmhouse in the valley of Alsop-en-le-Dale in the Debyshire Dales. I did not want to bring up my eldest daughter then 10 months old, in the centre of London, and he had decided to take up the offer of a place studying for a Masters in Art Education at Birmingham Polytechnic. Eventually he continued to study for a Masters in Philosophy with the aid of a grant from the Social Science Research Council. My youngest daughter was born a year and a half later, and soon after that I began to observe and collect significant examples of work by my eldest daughter, and then later by her sister.

We established a 'modus operandi' that continued for around two to three years during John's writing his Master of Philosophy dissertation. I established a studio downstairs which I worked in when I could, and he had a study upstairs. The children had a lot of room, and a large garden in which they could roam. For the first four years I was there all the time, and their father was there most of the time. I am acutely conscious of the fact that this may be mistakenly believed to be, or that I might claim it to be, a pre-requisite for the kind of work I am examining. It is not. This was the environment in which these things took place, and as Luquet observed it is often the case that something in the environment, whether physical, social, or familial, 'proposes' an idea or intention to the child. This will be demonstrated in the case studies that follow.

#### ***Methodology***

During my postgraduate course in Education in Manchester I had studied the work of Maria Montessori, and attempted to devise teaching systems in which the student can be given autonomy and control over their learning process, based on pursuing what many years later, I would find in Pistoia,<sup>11</sup> termed a 'filo conduttore', a line of enquiry. All these factors entered into the type of methodology I used in my observations of the children, and in the range of

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<sup>11</sup> see appendix 'Architecture, Space & Pedagogy in Pistoia' a paper written for the conference 'Creative Engagements: Thinking with Children', Oxford 2012, and also the website: [whatchildrenmakeofthings.co.uk](http://whatchildrenmakeofthings.co.uk)

materials I both provided and allowed them to use: as a practitioner in fine art, I had a wide collection of papers, materials, brushes, tools and practical equipment that were available to them. One of the most important preconditions for many of the things they did was that they had *permission* to work on or with certain materials, objects and surfaces not always automatically granted in all households.

The observations I made were based on the following principles, and were applied before I began studying for the Masters:

- a) not to suggest, or place any demand on them to make any thing, or make anything that was representational.
- b) not to interrupt them or draw attention to what they were doing unless they themselves required my attention or assistance.
- c) not to ask them afterwards what the drawing was 'of' or what it was.
- d) not to reward them for what they did, but to thank them if they gave them to me, and to express interest and pleasure in what they showed me or gave me.
- e) to create opportunities for them to work undisturbed with a range of materials both found and acquired.

One of the most important observations I made during this time was that if the children became aware of a parent's particular or heightened level of interest in what they were doing, they immediately either ceased doing it, or changed what they were doing, often to make it more 'performative' or exaggerated. Unless I was asked to look at what they were doing, or to help in some way, I found it was critically important to busy myself with other things, close by, and took care that they did not notice I was overtly observing them.

I collected the material they made, and their father photographed it in a way which also had to be carefully controlled in the sense of its having an everyday normality to it: the things they made were acknowledged, and valued to the extent they were put away with care, but no great fuss was made of them. Sometimes they would be put on the wall to create a continually changing display, and whenever possible I wrote notes on them (without them seeing me doing it). Although this was not possible with all the material I collected, it has been important to ensure that most of the material used did have direct observations from the time. I have critically revisited certain of the examples written about in the Masters thesis, and added more from the collection, which have notes and dates on or with them.

Having outlined the changing role and significance of process in fine art practice, and established the context and methodology of the enquiry, it is now necessary to consider what, in Luquet's theory, are considered to be the *objects of representation*.

## EXPANSION OF LUQUET'S MODEL:

### *OBJECTS OF REPRESENTATION*

As I have already stated in the previous chapter, Luquet does not make a distinction between the common usage of the term 'object' and its use in philosophy, as in 'objects of thought' when writing about the subjects children select to represent. He refers predominantly to material objects in the external world which even though they are represented by an 'internal model' of the object, are invariably material objects, and this is so even when the decision to represent them is because of their 'analogie de role' with another object already drawn.

However, other types of 'object' than material objects may be represented visually, such as the circular *movement* of the blades of the mower in Arnheim's example.<sup>12</sup> The movement of the blades is translated into a gestural movement through the manipulation of the pencil on the paper in order to represent circular movement, but at the same time it demonstrates an understanding of, in essence, the *principal of rotation*. The drawing bears no *mimetic* similarity to the appearance of blades in motion, but we understand it just as we would understand the gesture were it to remain a gesture only. To understand the movement of the mower and translate this into a pictorial form, depends upon an understanding or recognition of what constitutes the circle, or 'roundness' as such.

Observations of children during the process of painting or drawing reveal an interaction between different modes of expression. John Matthews, in *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning* gives detailed examples of the way in which the child's actions, and gestural acts integrate with and translate into the acts of drawing or painting: in the earliest stages Matthews emphasizes the range and variety of types of mark-making, often combined with expressive actions, that are too often dismissed as meaningless until the point at which a discernible form can be recognised.<sup>13</sup> At the beginning of Chapter 4 on 'Actions and Shapes' he writes 'certain unquestioned assumptions about what constitutes visual representation have effectively masked the range of uses to which the child puts visual media', and later:

....not only do children use visual media to represent the structure and shape of objects, they also use these to represent the *structure and shape of events*. Additionally, they investigate visual structure as of interest in itself. This structural investigation is a continuously

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<sup>12</sup> see Chapter 1, pp. 29-30.

<sup>13</sup> see Chapter 3, 'Meaningful Marks: The Beginning of Drawing', John Matthews, *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning*, 1999, London: Routledge Falmer pp.19-29.

unfolding dialectical relationship between the child, the medium, and the external world.

This is a journey through an epigenetic landscape in which new vistas of possibilities open up at every turning. (my italics)<sup>xvi</sup>

I have emphasized that particular phrase, 'the structure and shape of events' because it alludes to an awareness of a 'state of affairs' or *Sachverhalte*, and is linked to 'categorical intuition' which will be referred to later in relation to the first case study *Clapsong*, in this chapter, and also examined in greater depth in Chapter 4.

Matthews is highly critical of the assumption that 'fortuitous realism' occurs through the recognition of resemblance, and that before this, acts of mark-making are meaningless. In the chapter following the paragraph above, Matthews gives a detailed account of the expressive acts and sounds involved in a 'painting episode' by a girl of 2 years and 2 months, and her interaction with her mother during it.<sup>14</sup>

Luquet emphasizes the importance of the process of drawing and its development depending on the *relations* between (albeit material) objects through association, or logic, but he at no time provides any examples of drawings that represent *by any other means* than *through* the depiction of material objects, or *represent* other kinds of 'things' whether they be a kind of 'feeling', 'force', 'vitality', 'poignancy', 'despair' or in the case of Mozart's letter to his father, in music, 'towering rage'.<sup>xvii</sup> Neither does he admit of the objects being *formal elements* such as forms, colour, effects, patterns, or the specific qualities of the chosen medium or material. Whilst there is no reference in Luquet to the kind of gestural interaction between different forms of expression which Matthews refers to above, he does include the depiction of space and relations between things in space ('rabattement', transparency etc) and time ('successive' and 'epinal' types as defined in Chapter 1). The 'structure and shape of events' are evident in the 'successive' type of depiction of time.<sup>15</sup> He also emphasizes the importance of association and memory in the selection of the material objects that are depicted, although these are not 'coloured' so to speak by emotion or affect.

Coincidentally, Melanie Klein in the 1920s and 1930s was developing her investigations into the way in which external objects are invested with imaginary meaning by the child, and the role of the creative process as a means of restoration: 'she observed the complex interplay of guilt and anxiety, love and hatred, and the internal and external worlds in children in a way which was totally new and startling.'<sup>xviii</sup> She saw creativity 'as an attempt to recreate an

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<sup>14</sup> He later cites this episode again in even more detail, in his final chapter on 'Representation and Human Freedom' as exemplary of the kind of interaction and provision that is necessary 'if the modes of expression and representation through which children understand their worlds are to develop'. 160  
<sup>15</sup> see Chapter 1, p.47.



external and internal world felt to be lost or at risk in a way which did not deny the reality of the loss, of guilt or of responsibility'.<sup>xix</sup>

Winnicott<sup>xx</sup> who was influenced by Klein, brought attention to the 'transitional object', the child's first 'not-me' possession, her first use of a symbol, and her first experience of play, which depends upon the active collusion and participation of the parent, yet is initiated by the infant. The 'transitional object' is the piece of cloth or toy that the infant has to have with her, clings to, yet repeatedly and intentionally throws away, or 'loses'. It is invested with intense feelings of attachment and repudiation, desire and rejection. The 'transitional object' according to Winnicott symbolizes the union of the baby and mother (or part of the mother) that can be located at the place in space and time when the mother is in transition from being (in the baby's mind) merged in with the infant, and alternatively being experienced as an object to be perceived rather than conceived of.

'The use of an object symbolizes the union of two now separate things, baby and mother, *at the point in time and space of the initiation of their state of separateness.*'<sup>xxi</sup>

Winnicott claims in the first three points of his 'Main Thesis':

1. The place where cultural experience is located is in the *potential space* between the individual and the environment (originally the object). The same can be said of playing. Cultural experience begins with creative living first manifested in play.
2. For every individual the use of this space is determined by *life experiences* that take place at the early stages of the individual's existence.
3. From the beginning the baby has maximally intense experiences *in the potential space between the subjective object and the object objectively perceived*, between me-extensions and the not-me. This potential space is at the interplay between there being nothing but me and there being objects and phenomena beyond omnipotent control.<sup>xxii</sup>

He emphasizes immediately after this that this is an area based not on 'body *functioning*' but 'body *experiences*.' This is not a theory that identifies creativity with sublimation: these experiences belong to object-relating of a non-orgiastic kind, or to what can be called ego-relatedness, when it can be said that *continuity* is giving place to *contiguity*.<sup>xxiii</sup> He posits that this 'potential space', is critical not only to the ability to enter into cultural life, but into a creative relation with the world, and depends upon the 'favourable circumstances' built essentially on trust and understanding provided by the parent. What is illuminating about Winnicott's analysis here, is his emphasis on the 'potential space', an area of possibility in which objects are transformed: 'every object is a 'found' object. Given the chance the baby begins to live creatively, and to use actual objects to be creative into and with'.<sup>xxiv</sup> The play-ground is the indeterminate space in which the illusion of the object exists, and in which it is lost, then found, repeatedly. The object is repudiated, re-accepted, and perceived objectively.

It depends on a mother or an other who is prepared to participate and give back what has been thrown out, handed out, 'lost', or repudiated. Essential to this process is that it *survives* repudiation and returns *despite* it.<sup>16</sup>

The interaction of the child and the parents as well as the child and her world (both inner and outer) is evidenced in the case studies that are included in this chapter. The case study that follows has already been alluded to in Chapter 1, in the section on *Fortuitous Realism* in which I introduced the term 'exemplification', and it depended upon the request for a piece of music to be played repeatedly, and the coincidental provision of paper, paints and brushes.<sup>17</sup> There was no intention or hypothesizing by the parents that this would be an outcome.

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<sup>16</sup> I am reminded here of the lecture by John Sallis (Staffordshire University, June 2010) on 'The Spacing of the Imagination': 'imagination is *constant* in its presentation of the unseen aspects of sensible things - imagination will always hold open this space: the encorial space between earth and sky - the absolute recession of the sky can only be perceived through imagination holding together the apparent 'surface' with the total absence of surface that is sky'. The infant learns to trust that in this *imagined* space the object disappears but is then returned, or found again.

<sup>17</sup> Chapter 1 p.30.

### Case Study 1: *Clapsong* Painting



Figure 16. R. 3.6 *Clapsong*, painting, poster colour on paper.

The painting above, was made by my youngest daughter at the age of three. At the time she was demanding the repetition of a piece of music by the Greek composer Theodorakis. The importance of repetition has been emphasized in the earliest interactions between the infant and the parent, and between the infant and things in the world, and repetition is integrated into Luquet's model of process in the form of 'Automatisme Graphique'<sup>18</sup>

Whilst this is not an example of 'automatisme graphique' in that sense, it came out of the experience, in fact out of the demand, for repetition, and was made in part through physical acts that were repetitive. In the Masters thesis in which I first examined the work of Luquet, I wrote the following about this example:

The delights of this piece of music were I think, two-fold. There was an opening sequence of music that was irregular and syncopated, which included a sequence of clapping, which was to her (and I must add to myself as well), absolutely unpredictable. She would always try to clap in time and would always fail, and far from this dismaying her it was a constant source of astonishment, mirth, and eagerness to try again. This was followed by a chorus and then a melody in the tenor voice, followed by the chorus repeated and the clapping in a

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<sup>18</sup> see Chapter 1, pp. 24-25.

'round' that is repeated. The painting was made during a sequence of repeated listening. She did not state any intention before starting it, but declared categorically afterwards that this was 'clapsong', her name for the Theodorakis song.

She began painting with a set of black marks, which are 'clapped' down onto the paper in such a way that the bristles spread out to make a fan-shaped mark. (She had already discovered this in earlier paintings). The marks were made in sequence around the outer edge of the paper, running from left to right, and from top to bottom and up again on the left. The brush was then either changed or cleaned, and the red was used to make the central linear form in a continuous single flourish. There was then a return to the other brush or it was mixed again with black to make a clearly distinguishable second set of percussive marks that fill out the left-hand side and begin to move round again across the central form. The sequence and the nature of the sets of marks appear to exemplify the sequence and nature of the elements of the song. Both temporal and qualitative resemblance can be perceived in the percussive sequence of one set and the fluidity of the other, as well as having in common an overall form, the round. The fan-like appearance of the marks even bear a resemblance to the form of hands in the act of clapping, so that it is possible to claim other forms of denotation than the exemplification of gesture. In Luquet it could be claimed as an example of '*analogie morphologique*' (analogy of form). The structuring of the painting in a round demands a conceptual realisation of the entire object (the complete piece of music) in order to become a formal equivalent.<sup>xxv</sup>

In his chapter 'Actions and Shapes' Matthews cites many examples of children of a similar age, and earlier, associating sounds with expressive actions in gesture, drawing and painting, as well as the structure of events. The child he argues is engaged in structural investigations as well as representational ones, in the configuration of events and objects as well as their dynamics.<sup>xxvi</sup> At the beginning of Chapter 5, he writes under 'Patterns of action: Dynamical Systems':

These dynamic patterns of action form the beginnings of understandings about movement, location and changes of position. This chapter will look at the cross-modal transference of these structures, between two, three and four dimensions, and across media domains. We will see how actions made in the three-dimensions of space, plus the dimensions of time, are transferred to the two-dimensional world of the drawing surface; reciprocally, we will see that sometimes shapes and actions performed in drawing, act almost like notations for dance-like forms.<sup>xxvii</sup>

There are in the painting recognisable, common forms in the fan-shaped series of marks, often used by children in the early years as an exploration of a rotational movement. However, that they continued around the paper, and then, in the centre that she placed this flourish of scarlet, was unlike anything she had produced before. It is difficult not to associate the tenor voice in the 'centre' of the song, with the red flourish, surrounded by the

chorus, and the clapping. Matthews' painstaking research bears out the way in which in the early years the child is able to encode 'multiple aspects, or even 'proto-views' of the object or event'.<sup>xxviii</sup> It is these 'multiple aspects' that represent, or exemplify other types of experience than the visual that will be considered in the work of Lanyon that follows.

I referred to *exemplification* in Chapter 1 in the section on 'Intention' with reference to Arnheim's illustration of a drawing by a four-year old girl that illustrated the movement of a mower by a spiralling continuous line, and also to *Clapsong Painting*. *Exemplification* is of particular importance to this study not only because it provides an alternative form of representation, but because the *objects* of representation extend beyond the visible, or include other *aspects* of the visible. It is a key to the understanding of not only 20th Century and contemporary fine art practice but also certain essential qualities and means of communication that can be found in earlier works of art in which a signifier stands for something because it has certain qualities or a particular property, and not because of it bearing a likeness. It is possible for both to occur at the same time, in other words for both a mimetic form and exemplification to be united and which loads the image in such a way that it can be read in different ways, or that the deeper meaning is embedded, hidden, or reinforced. The work, or a part of the work possesses the very qualities to which it refers, but it also has a much wider reference in that its signification is not confined to a particular object, but to an entire class of qualities, which may relate to a wide variety and number of objects or things, either analogically or structurally. In this respect it links to both Luquet and Husserl: Luquet in his recognition of the key function of analogy and 'analogical transfer' between in his case, the *forms* of objects in the external world, including graphic representations and symbols, and also through the *role* that connects them, or the class/es to which they belong; and Husserl in his elucidation of perceptual and essential intuition:

Whereas perceptual intuition gives objects which are supposed to exist (in space and time), essential intuition gives us objects whose existence is not presupposed even though it may very well be illustrated or exemplified with regard to specific instances. And this is why the intuitive exemplification of the *eidos* or pure essence can take place just as well in phantasy or acts of imaginative intuition.

'Although the intuition of individuals is radically different from the intuition of essences, a connection obtains between them such that for every essence there corresponds a series of possible individuals as its factual instances and, conversely, for every individual experience an essence can be intuited which exhibits what is purely general in the individual. Thus the intuition of a red instance can always be transformed into the intuition of the essence 'red' while the latter can always be intuitively illustrated through the exhibiting of an instance, either in perception or in fantasy'.<sup>xxix</sup>

The significance of this relation between the 'essence' and the 'instance' is laid out in an

earlier passage passage by Macaan. This 'ideational abstraction' (of the idea 'red') which Husserl later terms *eidetic intuition*, is:

a type of intuition which is to be met with even in the foundations of logical thought, where it assumes the form of *categorial intuition* (Sixth Investigation). By comparison with the act of signifying, which is concrete and specific, ideational abstraction points towards the possibility of an apprehension of abstract and non-specific universals which, as such, form the basis of what Husserl means by the *meant* - that ideal object which functions as the correlate of the meaning-giving activities of consciousness.<sup>xxx</sup>

The importance of this form of intuition will be returned to in Chapter 4, when it will be considered in relation to Heidegger's essay 'The Origin of the Work of Art'.



Figure 17. Peter Lanyon *Soaring Flight*, 1960 Arts Council Collection

The work of Peter Lanyon, for example, who used gestural mark-making as an integral element in his work, was concerned with the sensations of flight, air and sea. Not the look of them, but of *being in* them, and his body's passage through them; the movement and power of the sea as well as its meeting with the land. He was fascinated with the edges between the solid and the fluid: the paintings become embodiments of complex combinations of physical sensation, geographical particularity, and reflections on time, space and place.

To take an example which is not from the 20th Century, but possesses this type of denotation in combination with a mimetic form: in Vermeer's 'A Maid-Servant Pouring out Milk' (Rijks Museum, Amsterdam), the rim of the earthenware jug, the crust of the bread, the wicker basket in which it is placed, the maid-servant's hands, and her cheeks all have the same rough painterly texture, and are flecked with crimson and white in amongst the rich ochres. They are quite different in texture to the rest of the painting. It is impossible to see this in reproduction, and indeed it reveals how profoundly meaning can be changed through the mechanism of reproduction.<sup>19</sup> Why did Vermeer do this? It is one of the distinctive characteristics of Vermeer's painting that he experimented with, and employed many different ways of applying the paint to the canvas. When I myself stood before this painting and speculated on whether there might be some particular point or meaning inherent in this set of things brought together in this way, the thought suddenly occurred to me, (and was suddenly surprisingly obvious)<sup>20</sup> that the connection between all these things in the painting: the salt-glaze on the jug, the earthenware of the jug, the wicker, the bread, the rosy cheeks of the maid, the ochre, the burnt ochre, all these things and the maid herself came from, or were close to the earth itself. They are brought together, and we are shown their *earthiness*, the roughness and richness of turned earth.

As Philip Rawson writes in *Seeing through Drawing* in relation to a drawing by Van Gogh (*The Sower in the Rain*, 1890, a chalk drawing)

all the lines express movement and life; and that movement and life are not only in the figure of the sower who is sowing the seed, but actually in the field - the ground upon which he is working. The urgent movements of the clusters of lines show us how the man is *sowing*, the weather is *weathering*, the field *fielding*, the cottage *cottaging*, almost literally as verbs. <sup>xxxi</sup>

The earth is alive, and the marks exemplify that *liveliness*, and the elements have force, and you feel their *forcefulness*, the dynamic is one where you sense the *driving* wind and rain,

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<sup>19</sup> Not only is the scale of the work changed, its context is removed, its content fundamentally distorted, and the viewer's physical relation to the art work (which can in some cases be of fundamental importance to the realisation of the work) is removed. To see these qualities, the viewer has to be before the painting itself.

<sup>20</sup> see Bruner *Beyond the Information Given* Chapter 12 'The Conditions of Creativity' 'An act that produces effective surprise - this I shall take as the hallmark of a creative enterprise.'.....'I could not care less about the person's intention, whether or not he intended to create. The road to banality is paved with creative intentions. Surprise is not easily defined. It is the unexpected that strikes one with wonder or astonishment. What is curious about effective surprise is that it need not be rare or infrequent or bizarre and is often none of these things. Effective surprises.....seem rather to have the quality of obviousness about them when they occur, producing a shock of recognition following which there is no longer astonishment.' Allen & Unwin, London, 1974

and the *difficulty*. This *verbal* element, this enactment through the way in which the drawing, or painting is constructed, (which in these cases includes a gestural handling), fixes the energy at the same time that it communicates it, and in communicating it, conveys the experience of being there, of Being itself. This will be returned to in Chapter 4 in relation to 'The Origin of the Work of Art'.

### *Summary*

Luquet, despite his recognition of the child's ability to perceive abstract relations through forms of analogy, at no time provides examples of drawings that represent by any other means than through the depiction of material objects. The form of intuition Husserl termed 'categorical' is confirmed in many of Luquet's examples but whether it is acquired, or as implied by Luquet, a capability already established in the mind <sup>21</sup> is uncertain.

The position Luquet takes up in relation to the material, despite his objections to the use of experimentation in the scientific method, is nevertheless one which excludes affect. I drew attention to the contribution of psychoanalysis and in particular the work of Melanie Klein and her theories on object relations, as well as the 'transitional object' and the 'potential space' in which it is situated, identified by Winnicott. This realm of imaginative and affective experience he argues is critical to our ability to enter into a creative relation with the world, and into a cultural life. In this 'potential space, every object is a 'found object'. Given the chance the baby begins to live creatively, and to use actual objects to be creative into and with'.<sup>xxxii</sup>

The case study 'Clapsong Painting' illustrates the possibility that the abstract understanding of 'circularity' (the 'round') is evident in both the form and the manner in which the painting is executed. The way in which the painting was made can be seen also as 'acting out' a rhythm, as well as an imitation of a percussive act (the brush was 'clapped' down onto the paper, and in so doing created a fan-like form similar to the form of hands clapping). Lanyon and Rawson emphasize the way in which these actions, these ways of using the medium, can exemplify a 'state of affairs', or a type of experience (the state of in-balance on the edge of a cliff, the flux in the meeting between the sea and the land). As I stated at the beginning of this chapter, it has been necessary to separate these 'elements', (objects of representation, gesture and drawing etc.,) and in so doing it raises certain problems. It divides elements that properly should be seen as co-existent and integrated. It is therefore important to point out that the exploration of objects of representation continues throughout the following sections, with the next section continuing what has been started in relation to the role of gesture, and in addition, examining definitions of drawing.

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<sup>21</sup> see Chapter 1, p.18, on the 'evolutionary process' evident in *Le Dessin Enfantin*.



## GESTURE AND DRAWING

The most common understanding of what comprises a drawing, is a line or a series of lines on a flat surface, conventionally upon a piece of paper. It may or may not be intended to be a representation of an object, or a thought, and it may or may not be intended to communicate. A scribble on any surface, a scratch or line marked in the frost on a window pane, will be classified as a drawing but often only if it is intentional, in the sense of it being made with intent. If it is not we tend to say that it is '*just scribbles*' or '*only marks*'. The use of a brush, as in the previous case study, *Clapsong*, rather than a pencil or pen, charcoal or other dry medium, tends to cause some doubt about whether the result should be called a drawing or a painting. The brush as it happened provided an augmented set of possibilities that allowed for the splaying out of the bristles to create fan-shaped marks, which have a form analogous to clapping hands.

Luquet makes no reference to the 'qualities' of the lines, or marks that depict, but *what* they depict and the relations between that which is depicted. Similarly with the relation between the drawing and surface upon which it is drawn, and the boundaries of that surface. The materials were as already stated, very limited and conventional. There are no drawings made with a brush, no other materials other than paper and pencils (sometimes coloured), occasionally ink, and occasionally painted (in the section on colour) and unfortunately there are no published reproductions in colour, so that it is difficult to see either what kind of medium has been used or what the colour is. Neither does he include any form of three-dimensional making in *Le Dessin Enfantin*. A larger set of definitions of drawing can provide an indication of what drawing is and what some of the reasons for drawing might be:

To cause something to move in a specified direction; to bring in, gather or derive (something) together; to bring (something) on oneself; to elicit; to extract; to cause to flow; to remove; to be selected randomly; to stretch or shape (metal) by pulling it through dies; to leave undecided; to draw upon (to make use of); draw a line (create a boundary for the purpose of exclusion).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *The New Penguin English Dictionary*, 2000

Implicit in this set of definitions are both the positive and negative, the creative or constructive *and* the destructive. If we return to the fundamental starting point of a drawing, the act of making a mark on a surface, we return to an area of contradiction in itself: one that whilst it can be seen as an affirmation of human presence, also requires if not the destruction then the alteration of a ground: what Rawson refers to as the 'gegenstand', which he translates as the 'given reality' or the 'objective reality-as-such'.<sup>xxxiii</sup> The importance and nature of this relation to a 'ground' will be taken up again later in this chapter. It is whatever the child or artist chooses to make marks upon. It is the earth, cave walls, bark, paper, walls of a building, trees, canvas, as ground, and not as object.

In psychoanalytic theory the ground and its treatment is interpreted variously as symbolic of the fundamental relation between the infant and the mother: according to Guerlac the Kleinians emphasize the reparative aspect of a sequential process in which the initial act of destruction, or acts, is followed by 'reparative' or further acts which make good the first sequence and turn it into a positive process.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Others, Lacan for example, emphasize an absence, or loss, that remains at the core of the process, as a consequence of the initial destructive act. In the Masters thesis, I proposed the possibility that the drawings upon the images in the *Radio Times Series* were about the relation between the children (two girls) and their father, and other male figures.<sup>23</sup>

The range of possible psychological readings into this initial act and consequent acts, have been utilized for specific reasons, according to Suzanne Guerlac, by theorists of contemporary art from the 1960s onwards: Greenberg, Fried, Rosalind Krauss & Julia Kristeva. In her paper 'The Useless Image: Bataille, Bergson, Magritte', Guerlac takes issue with the interpretation by Krauss and Bois of Bataille's reading of Luquet. The fundamental issue that Guerlac takes up, is their use of the concept of the 'informe' in their writing for the catalogue of the exhibition of that name at the Pompidou in Paris in 1996.

Guerlac saw the Pompidou exhibition, 'and the critical term that oriented it' as 'part of a strategy of "redealing modernism's cards."<sup>24</sup> The argument hinges on what occurs after the first act of mark making. Guerlac (and Bataille) refers only to Luquet's *L'Art Primitif* and not to *Le Dessin Enfantin* which had been published in 1927, in which they would have found a much fuller account of the *range* of acts that can follow the initial gesture of the first mark. Guerlac points out that Bataille refers to possibilities and choices that are made through the *addition* of more marks or through the *transformation* of those marks:

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<sup>23</sup> see *Games, Transgression, and the Other* later in this chapter.

<sup>24</sup> Guerlac is quoting here from "Yve-Alain Bois, "To Introduce a User's Guide", *October* 78 (Fall 1996): 29

Bataille proposes another approach, one he derives from observations Luquet had made concerning the origin of figuration in the graffiti-like drawing activity of children who love to dip their fingers in mud or paint and run them along a wall, taking a kind of instinctual pleasure in marking things up and destroying the surfaces around them. Bataille suggests that the deformation of the human form in the abstract anthropoid figures (the ones he calls *informe*) could be attributed to an operation of alteration, characterized as an innate instinctual desire to deface or deform materials, surfaces or objects. This process involves the following steps: First random scribbling or tears attack a given surface or support in a kind of instinctual gesture. Second a virtual object is discerned through imaginative projection into these random markings. Finally in a third dialectical moment, this virtual figure is altered or defaced in turn. It is in reference to this sequence that Krauss will write: "*Informe* denotes what alteration produces" <sup>xxxv</sup>

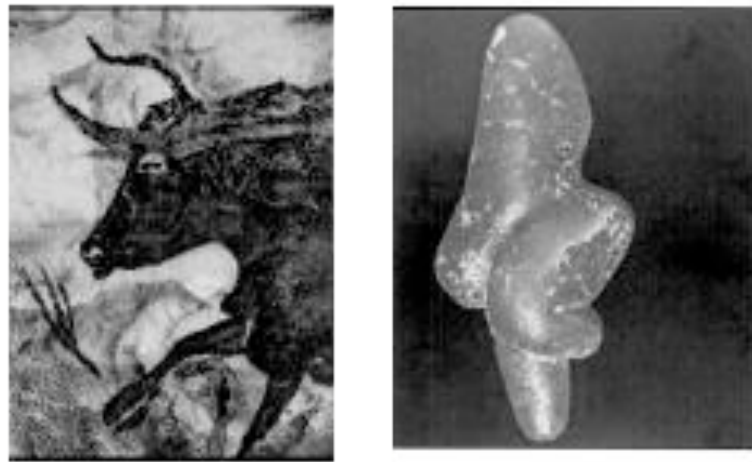


Figure 18

(illustrations from Guerlac's paper: Black Bull, Lascaux, re-printed from Georges Bataille, *Lascaux, or, The Birth of Art* (Lausanne, 1955); and Venus of Tursac (Dordogne), re-printed from Grand, Paule-Marie, *Prehistoric Art: Palaeolithic Painting and Sculpture* (Greenwich, Conn., 1967).

Krauss in stating that this alteration produces only the 'informe' or 'formless' is, according to Guerlac, presenting a limited interpretation of Bataille, who himself made the point that:

Another outcome is possible for the figured representation from the moment that the imagination substitutes a new object for the support that has been destroyed...it is possible, through repetition, to subject it to a progressive appropriation in relation to the represented original. In this way one passes, quite rapidly, from an approximate figure to more and more well-formed image (l'image de plus en plus conforme) of an animal for example. <sup>xxxvi</sup>

Despite this evident ability primitive man had for making images that 'conform' to what is a mimetic paradigm of representation of animals, they did not do so with the human figure. Why? Bataille sought both anthropological and psychological reasons for this difference,

and it provided the basis of a theory of 'transgression' in *L'Erotisme* (1957), after he had published *Lascaux ou la naissance de l'art* (1957).

As Guerlac writes:

Together with Derrida's grammatical term *différance*, transgression provided one of the major theoretical underpinnings for the notion of text and writing central to post-structuralist theory and its challenge to representation. This is why, even in our post-structuralist era, it remains a bit shocking to hear Bataille speak of a "sacred moment of figuration" in Lascaux (fig.1). He not only marvels at the miraculous seductive power of the cave's animal paintings but also attributes a specifically transgressive force to these figurative images, contrasting them with the grotesque depictions of human beings that he labels *informe* (fig 2)<sup>xxxvii</sup>

It is not possible to enter into a full analysis of Guerlac's essay here, except to point out that in the context of my own researches, it is particularly interesting to find specific connections being made between Luquet and Bergson, in her case by way of Magritte. In her contesting Krauss' and Bois' interpretation of Bataille's reading of Luquet, Guerlac makes the point that Bataille's reading indicates strongly that both the *informe* and the *de plus en plus conforme* are both 'virtual figures - images of pure invention'.<sup>25</sup> Whilst I take issue with the statement that they are 'images of pure invention', her point is that whilst one bears a resemblance to things in the world, and the other bears a resemblance to an image in the mind, they are both constructions. 'Painting does not give us an image that resembles the world; it materializes, or embodies in paint, a visual mental act - an act of resemblance,' she quotes from Magritte, and later:

'Each problem, he writes, involves three terms: "the object, the thing attached to it in the shadows of my mind, and the light in which this thing should appear (*devait appartenir*)" (*Ecrits*, 111). This elusive third term is crucial to the articulation of the other two. It is precisely this act of synthesis that Magritte calls "resemblance" and characterizes as an activity of inspired thought.'<sup>xxxviii</sup>

The 'thing attached to it in the shadows' of the mind, Guerlac relates to Bergson, and the role memory plays in perception. The temporality of perception, and the nature of its re-

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<sup>25</sup> Suzanne Guerlac 'The Useless Image' 36. I find the way in which Bataille defines these two approaches to representation interesting, in the way they reveal a notion of representation, not unlike Luquet himself, that is one based principally on a mimetic model. In her notes, Guerlac makes reference to Bataille's description: 'derobées à l'apparence humaine', which she translates as 'hidden from human appearance'. However other translations included under the term 'derobé,e' are 'secret', or 'hidden', and 'derober' means 'to steal' and this in itself implies other ways of interpreting why the figure may have been treated in this way. It may have been necessary to disguise the figure because it is stolen, (reflecting a fear of the power held by the maker over the subject) or it may have been that the forms are symbolic of other aspects of the human that were of particular importance to them (fecundity, fertility) or of rituals that were to be performed by or upon them. In other words, the objects of representation were not the outward appearance of the human being but their role, potential, or 'essence'.

presentation through drawing in the element Luquet termed 'the 'internal model' (discussed in Chapter 1) bears a striking resemblance to Magritte's statement above:

Furthermore how could we explain the fact that certain details are regarded as the most essential, as constituting the 'substance' of the object in some way encapsulating or symbolising the totality?.... If individual details only appear ...after the generic elements, we have to conclude that in the internal model of the earliest drawing these elements have been eliminated, *or more exactly put aside into a dark corner from which they will only emerge at a later time.* (my italics) ....<sup>xxxix</sup>

However it is in the nature of perception itself that the 'shadows' or the 'dark corner' are there all the time, in the sense that perception is always fugitive, always moving towards the future and away from the present, as well as being in itself, selective. The following passage from Levinas' *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*, utilizes similar metaphors in his explication of Husserl's concept of consciousness:

The concept of consciousness includes more than the central sphere of awakened and active consciousness. Husserl is far from ignoring that - as had been perceived by Bergson and James - each moment of consciousness is surrounded by a halo, by fringes, or, in Husserl's terms, by *horizons*, which are, so to speak, in the margin of the central phenomenon. "Each perception is an *ex-ception*(*jedes Erfassen ist ein Herausfassen*)" (*Ideen*.,§35, p.62) Cogitation makes the *cogitatum* its own by extracting it from a background which constantly accompanies it and which may become itself the object of an *Herausfassung*.(*Ibid.*,§113, pp.230-31) In the latter case, what was originally kept in sight falls into the background without totally disappearing from the field of consciousness. In a new *cogito*, "the preceding *cogito* ceases to shine, falls in the darkness, but is still kept alive, although in a different manner". (*Ibid.*, § 115, p.236)<sup>xl</sup>

(This passage will be returned to in relation to my reflections on practice in Chapter 3).

Yet, whilst perception is fugitive, in the act of drawing, (as with the infant who smears sauce across a table, or who later makes marks in the sand), there is a feeling of being *with* the material that is of the world: also that it will remain where I put it, where I can see that I *am*, here and now, and that there I *have been*, and the drawing *will remain* for as long as the world will allow it.

This fundamental assertion is what perhaps is similarly so compelling about the nature of the 'imprint'. The artist Joseph Beuys saw the direct nature of drawing as having the character of an 'imprint' not just of external reality, but doubly, of the inner life of the person who makes it. He used 'imprint' both literally and metaphorically, working with woodcuts, slate reliefs, moulds, casting, plant imprints, imprints of animal hoofs, traces of animal tracks: all these were processes which involved the direct use of 'ready-made' objects or imitated their qualities and forms.

In the broadest sense, the drawings have an imprint character. The mark of a pencil or a pen, the brushstrokes, are imprints, albeit of the lightest variety. If we recall that for Beuys the reality of the inner spirit must be added as the triggering factor, then we indeed have the elements involved in his drawings. For him drawing is never a decision of the eye alone. He strongly expressed his opposition to the retinal..."For me it's the word that gives rise to all pictures". So even invisible processes - such as reading and speaking - are depicted. <sup>xli</sup>



Figure 19. J Beuys *Tulipidendron luriofolium*, 1948, Watercolour, pencil 35.8x25.2 cm (SB2)

Not only is it necessary to take account of the factors already articulated, the nature of the surface itself, and the way in which an impression or mark is made upon it or into it, it is also of critical importance to take account of the manner and means of making them. Matisse started using scissors to cut shapes out of coloured papers in 1932 as a means of exploring designs for a series of murals commissioned by Dr. Albert C. Barnes for his foundation in Merion, Pennsylvania, and also for his designs for Diaghalev's 'Ballet Russes' in 1938 (*Rouge et Noir*), but it was his illness which confined him to bed from 1941-2 and which brought about the adoption of this process as one favoured above others (*Jazz* 1947, *The Swimming Pool*, & *Acrobats* 1952).



Figure 20. Henri Matisse *Blue Nude I* 1952. Gouache on paper, cut and pasted on paper

The cut out paper allows me to draw in colour. It is a simplification. Instead of drawing an outline and filling in the colour - in which case one modified the other - I am drawing directly in colour, which will be the more measured as it will not be transposed. This simplification ensures an accuracy in the union of two means...It is not a starting point but a culmination'.<sup>xlii</sup>

In looking at the reproductions of his cut-outs, it would seem a straightforward process, albeit remarkable, to cut out a form so clearly and directly that is by no means either predictable or mimetic. In fact, seeing the works in their materiality, these are by no means straightforward, but in many cases painstakingly constructed from a number of pieces, and in the very large murals, were moved about repeatedly by being pinned in place by assistants until the final composition was decided upon and they were attached.



Three artists whose work has particular significance for this thesis were indebted to Matisse's *papiers decoupees*, for a variety of reasons that link them and Beuys: imagery which references 'primitive' figurative forms, print, and singularity of colour. Yves Klein, Fontana and Arnulf Rainer. Yves Klein held his performance with models as 'living brushes' entitled *Anthropometries de l'epoque bleue* in 1960 at the Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain, in Paris, part of an extended series of *Anthropometries* that continued until his death in 1962.



Figure 21. Yves Klein, *Anthropometries de L'Epoque Bleue* 1960



Figure 22. Yves Klein, *Princesse Helena*, 1960



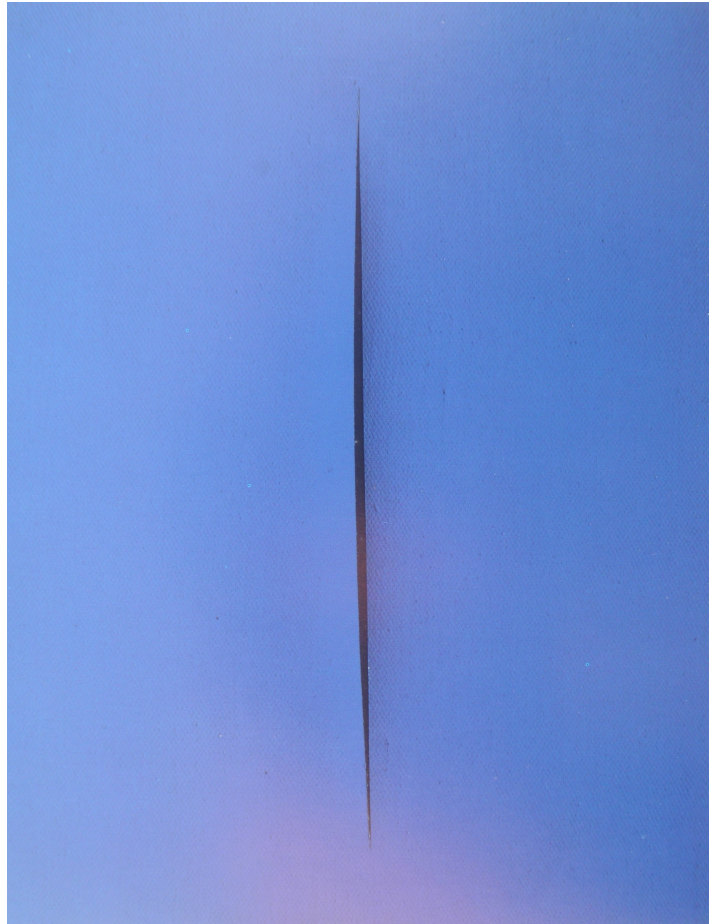


Figure 23. Lucio Fontana *Concetto spaziale - oggi piove a torrenti* Spatial Concept - Today It's Raining Cats and Dogs, 1965-66, oil on canvas, 153/4 x 13 in.

In Fontana's works the 'integrity' of the surface, a surface redolent with the history of painting, the canvas, is drawn upon by being cut into, by its invasion and its opening up to what lies behind, or beyond.<sup>26</sup> Other works, ('*Concetto spaziale - attese sono nuvoloni che mettono tristezza*'- 'Spatial Concept -Expectations are Heavy Clouds Bringing Sadness' 1964, and '*Attese - Rosso*', 'Expectations - Red' 1964, are composed of highly controlled linear incisions into immaculate canvas surfaces. The canvas is not 'attacked' but *incised*.

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<sup>26</sup> 'This is not merely an "invasion" of the field of space still anchored to a concept of two-dimensionality, but something far more important, namely its reduction to the status of a pretext, a *corpus delecti*, attacked with the vaguely improper weapon of a razor by an artist who inflicts a bloodless mutilation symbolically guaranteed against any serial repetition with scientific precision' Vitoria Coen "Artists" in *Minimalia, An Italian Vision in 20th-Century Art*, Ed. Achille Bonito Oliva,. Milan: Electa 1999.

Arnulf Rainer a decade later attacked the surface in a very different way, the surface or 'gegenstand' often being a large-scale black and white photographic image of his own face. His face is controlled in such a way to produce an expression that is itself often distorted. The image is then attacked or smeared with paint, or marks, which through their overlay variously distort, partially or even entirely destroy or eradicate the image.

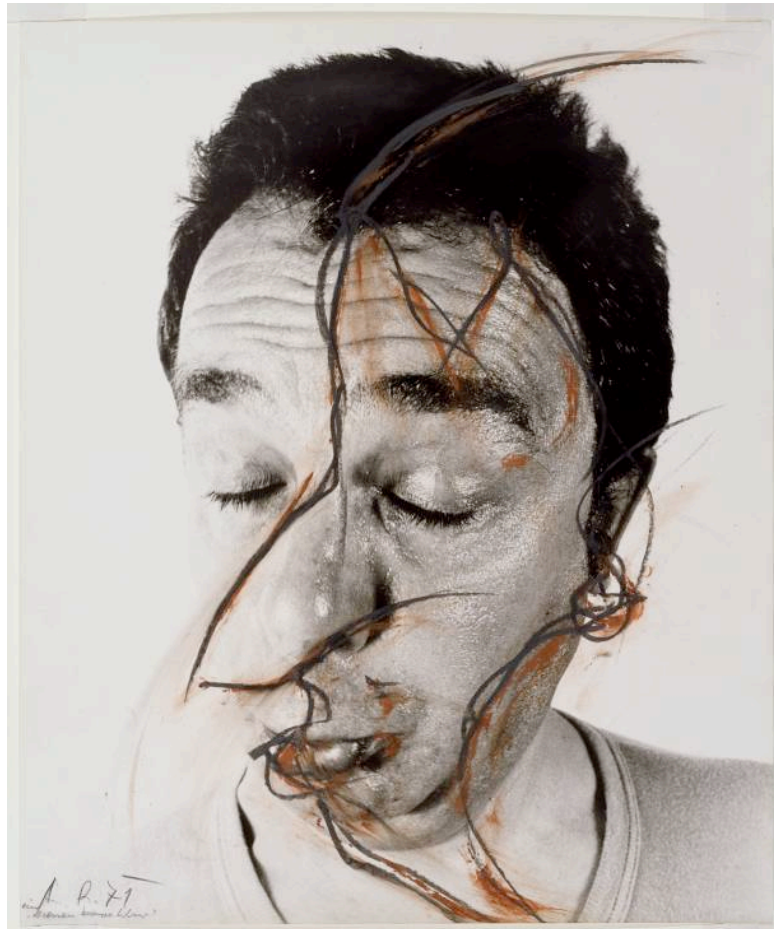


Figure 24. Arnulf Rainer *A Nose Adjustment (Face Farce)* 1971

Klein's aim was very different from that of Rainer and it is not my intention to imply that the aims of these artists were similar, when evidence makes it clear they were not.<sup>27</sup>

Throughout his various writings, Rainer lays great emphasis on nervous excitement which, for him, is inseparable from the act of drawing. He describes the process of drawing on, or painting over, one of his photographs as 'correction' or 'accentuation'. 'I draw over it and strain myself to concoct new, important, significant falsehoods. As soon as I start to believe in it, I abandon the sheet. The stronger the physiognomic quality, the quicker goes the graphic

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<sup>27</sup> Klein made it clear that "this endeavor is opposed to 'action painting' in that I am completely detached from the physical work during its creation" He wrote that he detested "artists who empty themselves into their painting...(and) spit out every horrible, rotten, and infectious complexity" as if to burden others with "all their sorry failures." Nan Rosenthal, 'Assisted Levitation: The Art of Yves Klein' in *Yves Klein*, Ed. Dominique de Menil, Institute for the Arts, Houston, Texas 1982, 124 - 5.

intensification' (Breicha (ed.) 1980, p.105). This process is applied to only a small selection of the hundreds of self portrait photographs taken in any one session, those in which Rainer immediately recognises either 'facial transformation' (Gesichtsverwandlung) or 'nervous tension' (Nervenspannung) amounting to a 'change of character' (Persönlichkeitsveränderung). The remaining photographs are stored away and checked every so often for 'missed discoveries or nuances'. Rainer believes that photography on its own is incapable of adequately reproducing exertion or strain, whether of an agitated or static kind. He rejects the notion of himself as an actor, but admits his work is half way between performance and fine art. 'When I first began graphically to work on the photos of my mimic farces I discovered things; entirely new, unknown people who lurked within me but whom my masks alone could not formulate' (Breicha (ed.) 1980, p.106 <sup>xliii</sup>)

My point is to extend, through these examples, the definition of drawing to one that not only includes the signification of the quality of the mark, but also the nature of its relation to the material upon which it is situated, or with which it interacts, and the means by which it has been accomplished.<sup>28</sup>

In the publication *Drawing Now - between the lines of contemporary art*, the work of 43 artists is brought together: the work of Tracey Emin, Paul Noble, Cornelia Parker, David Shrigley, Sarah Woodfine, and Erwin Wurm, are included to both explore and illustrate the varied approaches to drawing that are occurring nationally, and internationally. In this quotation from the preface it is important to note the use of the terms 'performative', and 'appropriation':

the selection aims to present drawing by traditional means with a conceptual edge, with an emphasis on how the process of making the drawing contributes to its content, a concept which we describe as 'performative'. It provided an opportunity to scrutinise what might be currently valued in drawing: its simplicity and obsessive nature in terms of the application of traditional materials; its capacity to reflect postmodern preoccupations of appropriation, fragmentation and indeterminacy; its capacity to express in contrasting ways through gesture and allegory; and its potential to challenge what might be considered aesthetic.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Rainer's work is particularly interesting in relation to the case study 'Radio Times Series' in Part 2 of this Chapter.

<sup>29</sup> *Drawing Now - between the lines of contemporary art* 2007, I.B.Tauris, London, New York. 'TRACEY is an online peer-reviewed journal, hosted by Loughborough University (School of Art & Design) which publicises and disseminates material concerned with contemporary drawing research. Editors - Simon Downs, Russell Marshall, Phil Sawdon, Andrew Selby, and Jane Tormey editors of book also. Started by Jane Tormey in 1999'. This statement (p.vii) defines the concept of the journal: 'The name TRACEY derives from a combination of the words trace, traceur, and trait. (Derrida's use of trait contains a range of meanings - feature, line, stroke, mark). The French concept of traceur does not only mean to draw and definitely does not mean to trace; rather it implies a direct creation and transcription of the mental plane to the material- a mark being made, a creative vector.'

### *Summary*

The nature of the tools, the process of making the drawing and the relation of the maker to them and the surface upon which it is made all have potential as signifiers in the resulting drawing or work. It has been shown that the surface can be symbolic in its own right. The significance of the acts through which the drawing is made has been discussed in relation to Bataille's criticisms of Luquet, and Guerlac's interpretation in relation to Krauss' and Bois' reading of Bataille. The examples of Beuys, Matisse, Rainer and Fontana all demonstrate the rich symbolic possibilities inherent in the manner in which the image is made, and extend the concept of drawing to that of the imprint, the trace, the incision and the cut, in ways which move between embellishment, cold precision, and attack. Rainer said that through his over-drawing and painting he was 'practising accentuated self-reproduction, but also symbolic change and self-destruction.'<sup>xliv</sup>

In the case study that follows, the process of cutting, and folding led to a series of acts and a perception that were of such a striking nature, it prompted together with other examples, the keen desire to try and understand how it could have come about (in other words, it is what started off my first investigation). It extends the notion of drawing to what might be claimed to be more a structural transformation.

Case Study 2: *Skeleton*



Figure 25. *Skeleton* (R: 3.2)



I did not observe the making of this piece: it was done in another room and brought to me, completed and held up to me with the word 'skeleton'. First of all it was extraordinary to me that a three-year old was able to cut it out of an A4 sheet of copy paper in such a way that it held together, quite apart from the fact that it did indeed resemble a skeleton in that there was a discernible middle section that had rib-like shapes, and below it longer bits and pointed triangular parts which resembled legs and feet. The question it posed was at what point did the form become seen as skeleton? Did R have an image in her mind beforehand, did it occur to her during the process of cutting into the paper, or did it occur to her afterwards when she held it up to bring it to me?

It is hardly credible that she had the *intention* of creating a 'model' of a skeleton, for this is a model rather than a picture. It is not a drawing, or is it? It would look very different when seen flat, and I think would be unrecognisable as a skeleton (unfortunately I do not have a photograph of the paper laid flat) but it would be more readily accepted conventionally as a 'drawing'. So if it is hardly credible that she had the intention to create a 'skeleton', and it would not have looked like a skeleton in the process of cutting into the paper, she must have perceived a resemblance with this form that she had seen before when she picked it up, brought it to me, and named it. It is, in other words, a 'classic' example of Luquet's definition of 'fortuitous realism'.

The paper is not just randomly cut into: it has been folded and then cut in some parts. The area which resembles ribs in the centre has been folded perhaps twice, and then cut, and the part at the bottom which could be interpreted as a foot has also been folded, but this time it looks like it has been folded afterwards. 'Fortuitous realism' is the accidental creation of forms, which the child then perceives as resembling something, but which they had no intention of depicting, and which can lead to the transformation of one idea into another. This is not an obvious skeleton: it is a quite abstracted form and whilst it could be said to have the fundamental distribution of different elements that make up the human skeleton, a skeleton of a skeleton so to speak, one which has the basic structure, it may not necessarily be obvious to everybody that this is what it represents. It is very obvious, but of the greatest importance, that the paper is white. She brought it to me, called it by the name 'skeleton' and held it up for me to see and in so doing it was very clearly recognisable to me.

If there was no intention beforehand, in the sense of intending to make a skeleton, there must have been an intention to make 'something'. If she just started to cut into the paper, then held it up and saw the form of a skeleton within it, we would have to accept that a child of three could recognize and name it, even though she could not have drawn it *intentionally*. Her sister was already at school, being two and a half years older than her, and they used to enjoy singing the song: 'Dem bones, Dem bones, Dem dry bones.....' and we would point to the different parts of the body as we sang it. I have no memory of showing her any pictures of skeletons, but I did have drawings in my studio of the skeletal and muscular structure of the body, in amongst a lot of other things that I collected around and had on the wall as reminders and stimulus for my own practice.

It is also most important that cutting things out, as well as tearing paper and folding it, was an activity that took place regularly as part of a repertoire of making (see examples illustrated below and in section on 'Materials and Methods'). The following two illustrations show the two sides of a cut and folded paper work made for her father by the same child at the age of 3 years 8 months. It involved a complex series of operations: folding, cutting and then pinching which gathers the paper up in parts. The sequence is extremely difficult to work out, but seems to depend on the paper being folded and then cut, rather than cut and then folded, which is a sequence that is adhered to in the other examples that follow, where it can be observed more clearly.

The two illustrations that follow show a cut, folded and drawn upon work, in the various possibilities of its being opened and folded back again. It is very evident from the lined paper used that this was from the same source of paper, and the date shows it is made on the same day, as the one above. I have only the dates for these; there is no commentary or account made on the circumstances in which they were made, but they are evidence for a way of working with materials that displays a repetition of approach or strategy, which occasionally, but not always included the addition of drawing. It was in other words treated as a way of making in its own right. This repertoire of making, that each child develops, is composed of different approaches to, or strategies for the making process, and J and R each had very different 'repertoires', which became evident over the time I observed them.

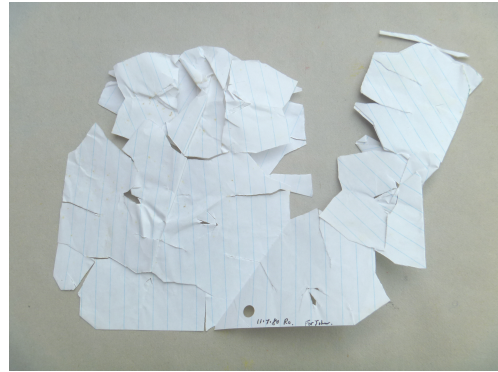


Figure 26. R.3.8 'For John' (approx 20 x 20 cm)

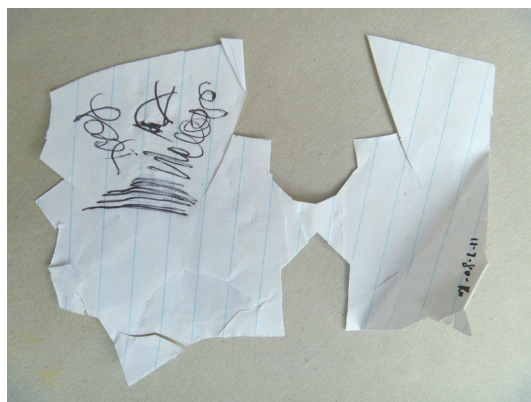


Figure 27. R.3.8 (open - 10 x 8 cm, closed 9 x 6 cm)



In Figure 25 (above) it is important to note how the drawing is strictly confined to a specific area, and within that area is closely related to the triangular form of the area, in the way that it is set within it, and also the little drawing that of the three forms a shape, it is a triangular shape.

The following series of images were made by the same child at the same age as those previously, but on a different type of paper. The photographs show a cut and folded work, in a sequence as it is unfolded, turned over and re-folded, and which includes a small figurative drawing made with a fibre-tip pen.

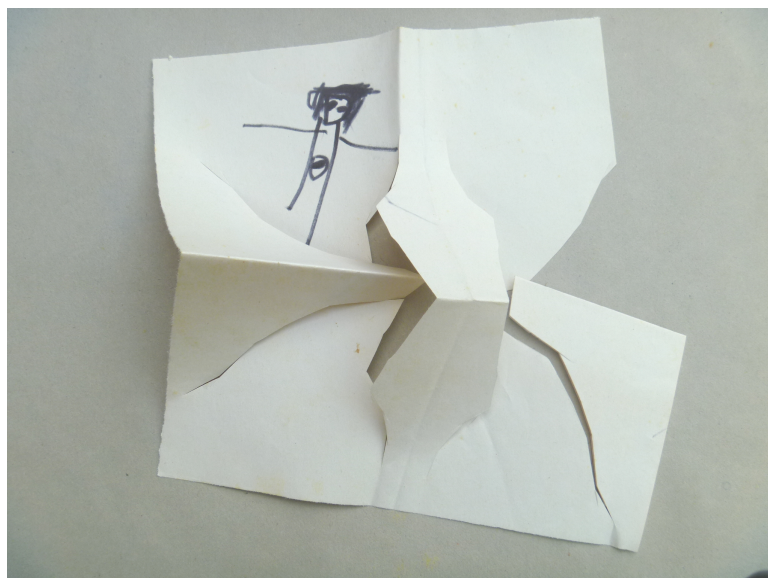


Figure 28 R. 3.8 11 x 12 cm (folded completely) when opened up: 19 x 22cm

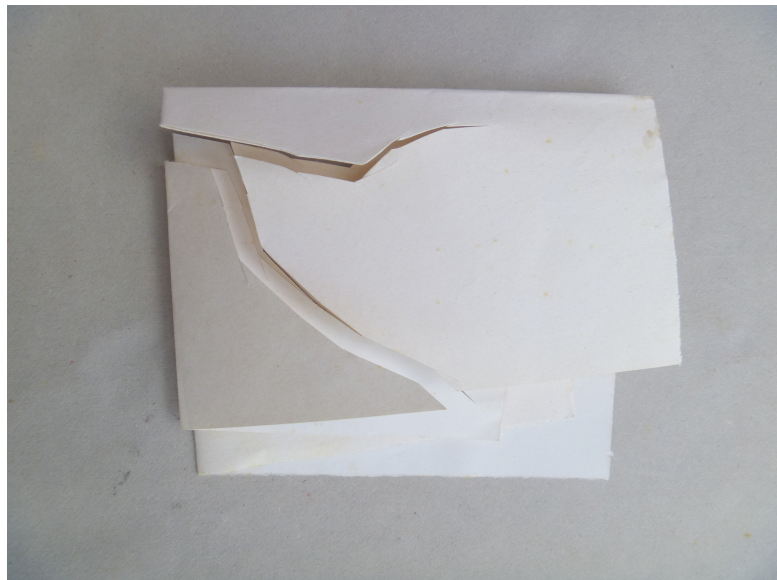


Figure 29. R. 3.8 - 11 x 12 cm previous piece when folded up.

It is clear from these photographs that the paper is changed structurally, by being folded, and then cut, and that from being something flat becomes something three-dimensional. It is a kind of parcel or letter, and its being able to be opened out is an important characteristic of both these pieces, whilst 'skeleton' was shown me and named as such, to remain as it was, although it had been made by a similar method. In all of these examples, the paper has been turned into a series of *objects*, rather than pictures.

The drawing upon it could be said to demonstrate their difference, as it is on a flat part of the paper that has been made object. I do not know whether the drawing was made before or after the process of folding and cutting, but studying it closely, the right arm stops just short of the cut, and the legs stop parallel with the cut below. The hair is also drawn at the top of the head, parallel to the top edge of the paper. This demonstrates an awareness that is evident in other examples, of the edges of the surfaces that are drawn on, and the drawing's relation to them. It does not prove conclusively however that the drawing was made after the process of cutting and folding, although it seems likely.

This little figure is rather extraordinary in its frank depiction of what appears to be the genital area, in its simplicity and directness (it seems like an open declaration of her gender). The figure is not hidden, but situated on the 'outside' of the object.

### *Summary*

The examples above test the limits of definitions of drawing, and in the last two combine the most 'traditional' and the most 'modern' concepts of what drawing is. Drawing in these and the other examples and case studies discussed in the thesis, performs a variety of roles, and is

used for different purposes. It has different kinds of sense, and different ways of becoming. In the cut and folded paper pieces above there is a very strong 'what if' to what was happening: the way that one fold leads to another; is added to or cut into; is twisted or turned and folded again; so that, at times, the sequence becomes impossible to determine.

In the case of *Skeleton* in lifting it up R saw a resemblance, in other words it was an example of what Luquet termed 'analogie morphologique' (analogy of form), in which the form of something will stimulate drawings of things of a similar shape or form. In showing it to me, and naming it (without any request by me, or question asked) here was a clear example of recognition. In the same way at the age of 4 years and 11 months the same child, made additions to a till receipt and named it 'worm' (at a time when insects and small creatures fascinated her).<sup>30</sup>

In some cases that follow it is evident that there is a more straightforward 'picture-making' going on, and there is a clear outcome in the form of a representation. In others the role is more complex, and difficult to define. For example in the 'Radio Times' series, the drawing looks more like graffiti, or like an attack, but when examined more closely it becomes evident that each image was responded to differently. Some examples show a way of using drawing in a way that is more like 'pretend writing', and is used in contexts where writing is usually expected (letters, bank slips, forms). However in all these cases, as I have already stated, it is evident that more has to be taken into account than the drawing, (or cutting, or collecting) by itself. I shall now examine the concepts *ground* and *context* in relation to further examples.

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<sup>30</sup> see Figure 5, p.35.

## GROUND AND CONTEXT

Earlier, in the section on 'Gesture and Drawing', I referred to Rawson and his use of the term 'gegenstand', which translates as the 'given reality' or the 'objective reality-as-such' and which he applies as a term for the 'ground' or surface upon which the drawing is made. In 'primitive' art it has been observed that occasionally the drawing 'picks up' on certain forms of the rock that have a similarity to a particular form of animal for example: a phenomenon not unlike the way in which Luquet describes the recognition of a form in a drawing that does not initially have an intention, but becomes 'adopted' so to speak, *as* the subject once it has been recognised ('fortuitous realism'). The important difference is that the 'ground' in the former is what triggers the interpretation, not the drawing. With the work that I describe and examine throughout this dissertation, one of the most important points I want to draw attention to, is that the 'ground' or the 'given reality' that has been chosen to work with or on, is every bit as important as the drawing that is made upon it, or the changes that are made to it. One of the most fundamental elements of composition is the shape or form of the ground upon which the drawing or visual work is to be situated, and yet the illustrations in *Le Dessin Enfantin* do not include the edges of the paper upon which the drawings are made. There are two important aspects to this fact which are of the utmost importance to this study: the first is that it reveals the emphasis, still very commonly held, that treats the 'figure' as the work, and ignores the 'ground'; the second is that the purpose of this thesis is to draw attention to examples which reveal the child can have an acute awareness of both, and of the relation between them.<sup>31</sup> In the example of the envelope that follows, the interrelation is essential: the drawing would not have occurred without the structural existence of the flap, and of an interior space. It is my aim to draw attention to the *relation between* what is done to and with it (through an act or set of actions that comprise the making process), and the 'given reality-as-such'. First of all however, I want to draw attention to a range of meanings that are attributed to the term 'gegen' and 'gegenstand' because of their relevance to not only the formal considerations that I emphasize here, but for their importance to an elucidation of

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<sup>31</sup> Arnheim, who is most overtly indebted to the theories of Gestalt, contributes several pages to the phenomenon of figure-ground (*Art and Visual Perception* pp182-198). He refers to Rubin and the conditions that he classified as determining what assumes the 'figure' and what the 'ground'. He does not refer to the full classification by Kohler of what constitutes 'goodness', i.e. what we are able to see most readily and remember easily, although some of those characteristics are included in Arnheim's 'collection'. The field is very considerable, especially in the analysis of ambiguous and paradoxical figures. Contemporary psychology no longer accepts the classical Gestalt theory of pre-determined patterns, in which the brain bears an isomorphic relation to the perception of form.

*categorial intuition*. In the section on 'Objects of Representation' I referenced Macaan's explanation of *eidetic intuition*, the intuition of essences, in Husserl's theory of Intuition and related it to what Goodman defines as 'exemplification'.<sup>32</sup>

The definitions in Cassell's German-English Dictionary indicate the range and relations that are implicit in the related terms:

'gegen' - towards, to, in the direction of; against, opposed to, contrary to, over against, opposite to; compared with; in the presence of; in exchange, in return for; about, approximately.

'gegenstand' - subject; object; matter; item

'gegenstandlich' - (adj) objective, perspicuous, graphic.

'Gegenstandlichkeit' - objectivity

'gegenseitig' - reciprocal, mutual

'gegenseitigkeit' - reciprocity

'Gegend' - region, district.<sup>xlv</sup>

Included in 'gegen' is a sense of spatiality ('in the direction of', 'opposite to') and relations ('compared with', 'opposed to'), there is a sense of a region of relations. Levinas in his *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*, explains the relation between sensible perception and categorial intuition as follows:

What characterizes categorial as opposed to sensible perception is that the former is necessarily founded on sensible perceptions. Acts such as that of "conjunction" or "disjunction" constitute new forms of objects which, in essence, could not be given in "schlichte" acts which grasp their objects all at once. *They have an essential relation to the sensible contents on which they are based.* "Their manner of appearance is essentially determined by this relation. We are here dealing with a sphere of objects (*Gegenstandlichkeit*) which can only show themselves 'in person' in such founded acts" (LU,III, 146 (p.788)). The character of being "founded", together with their *sui generis* relation to the act and the correlative objects on which they are founded, characterize the mode of appearing and existing of ideal objects. This mode, however, is different in the case of categories and in that of ideal essences. In the intuition of categorial forms, the object founded includes in itself the objects which found it. A *Sachverhalt* contains, in some way, the things that constitute it; essences, on the contrary, although they are founded on sensible perception, do transcend it in some way'<sup>xlvi</sup>

What I want to draw attention to in this passage is both the nature of categorial intuition, and the term '*gegenstandlichkeit*', which in this quotation from Husserl by Levinas, is used to refer to 'a sphere of objects', not simply 'objectivity' as in the Cassell definition, but which includes the other meanings above from Gegend - region, and gegenstand - subject, object,

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<sup>32</sup> See p.80.

matter, item. A region carries with it the idea of a domain, a ground, an area of a certain extension. The object (subject, matter, item) is one that is situated, and has a relation to the things around it, and its region/ domain, or in the context of this section: ground. It is in this broader sense that I intend to use the term as well as in the more precise way it is used as a term when discussing the formal constituents of a drawing or painting. In terms of sculpture or three-dimensional work the 'gegend' could be its space or the type of space in which it is situated in its physical given-ness, but also its domain of other like objects (three-dimensional artworks), in which there are other 'regions' ('land art', 'installation etc.,'). One of the most striking characteristics of the observational drawings of students in the early stages of art and design education is their over-riding tendency to remove 'objects' from their context. A figure/chair/apple will be drawn in isolation from the space it inhabits, and the other things around it. The relations between objects and the space in which they appear are removed in order to concentrate on the isolated object. All sorts of devices and approaches have to be used in their tuition in order for them to begin to see how the relations between them affect the perception of the object. There is a doubling of this perceptual blindness in the way in which the drawing is not seen in relation to the intrinsic qualities and proportions of the material upon which it is made.

The following examples however demonstrate that at an early age we *are* aware of these relations. Some of these drawings are made as a means of 'framing' found material, or in terms of the discussion above, providing a *ground* for them (*Matisse-letter*). All of them demonstrate the acute awareness of the edge/s that I referred to in the last section. In the 'envelope' below, the drawing is completely hidden, until, like a 'jack-in-the-box' it is

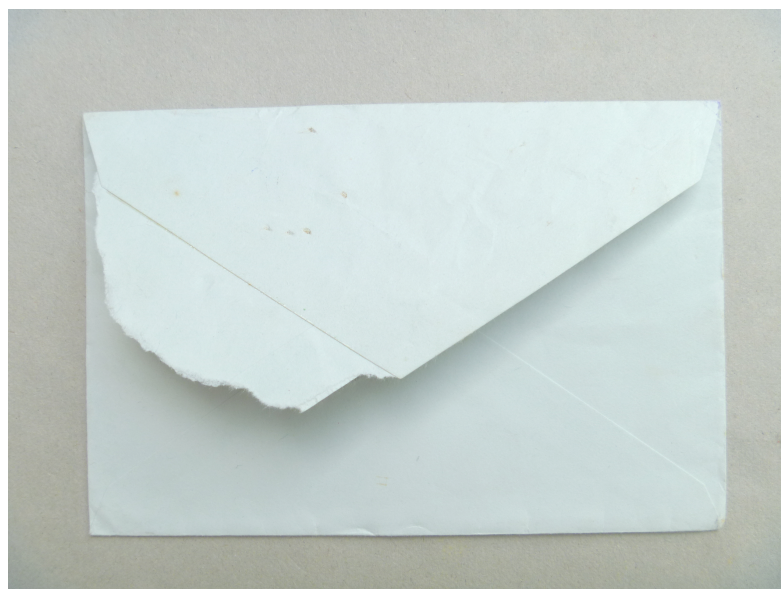


Figure 30. *Envelope R.* (exterior)



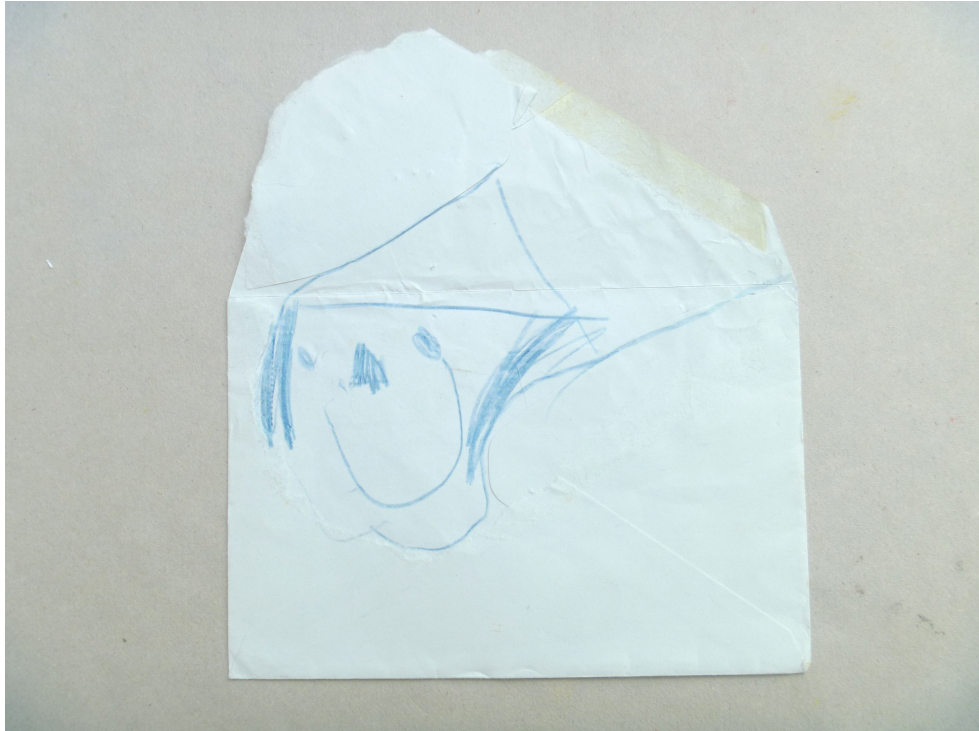


Figure 31. R. *Envelope* (pencil on envelope, interior of envelope in Fig.30)

opened. The 'ground' is the envelope, the context of which is *communication* to which is added 'surprise'. The blue pencil was used to trace around the edge of the opening of the envelope, to form the boundary of the drawing: it is hard to see in the reproduction, but the upper left side of the triangular 'hat' follows the edge of the torn off lower part of the envelope, which acts as a guide, as does the torn edge that remains of the lower part, and the remaining intact part up to the right hand corner. What order this occurred in I have no evidence of: whether the tracing then triggered the idea of a face with a hat, or whether the torn shape triggered it is impossible to know, but that it is made to fit it perfectly is beyond dispute.

Other examples involve the transposition of objects from one place to another (to another ground, as occurs in the case of the case studies *Parcels* and *Matisse-Letter*), or are *embellished* in the place or ground in which they are found or situated as overleaf. By *embellished* I mean the addition of drawing or colour to a found object which at times appears to be decorative, but at others is clearly more complex.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> This will be evident in my analysis of the *Radio Times Series*.



Figure 32. Embellishment. Above: J. 7.3 & R. 4.8. Below: J. 5.3  
chalk on stone and terracotta

The stone ball above was 'embellished' with chalks in situ, as was the 'Polar Milk Cooler'. On the stone above, the 'girl' was drawn in a way that echoes almost exactly the form of the ball and its support, which similarly has a large 'head', a minimal 'torso' and a 'skirt'. On the terracotta 'Cooler' the 'neck' is embellished differently to the 'shoulder' of the pot and indicates an understanding of the conventional modes of decoration of vase forms.

In the two images overleaf, J, having discovered two identical copies of the Sunday Times magazine, decided to 'embellish' them, using the same materials (oil pastels, which are soft enough not to tear the paper which is thin), in such a way that their 'affect' is very different. In the case study *Matisse Letter* that follows, a ground is made for the found object; and in the next, *Parcels*, we have 'figures' being found for 'grounds' one of which has a 'figure' in it already (the image of a train). In both cases, 'ground' as region or 'gegend' will be explored.



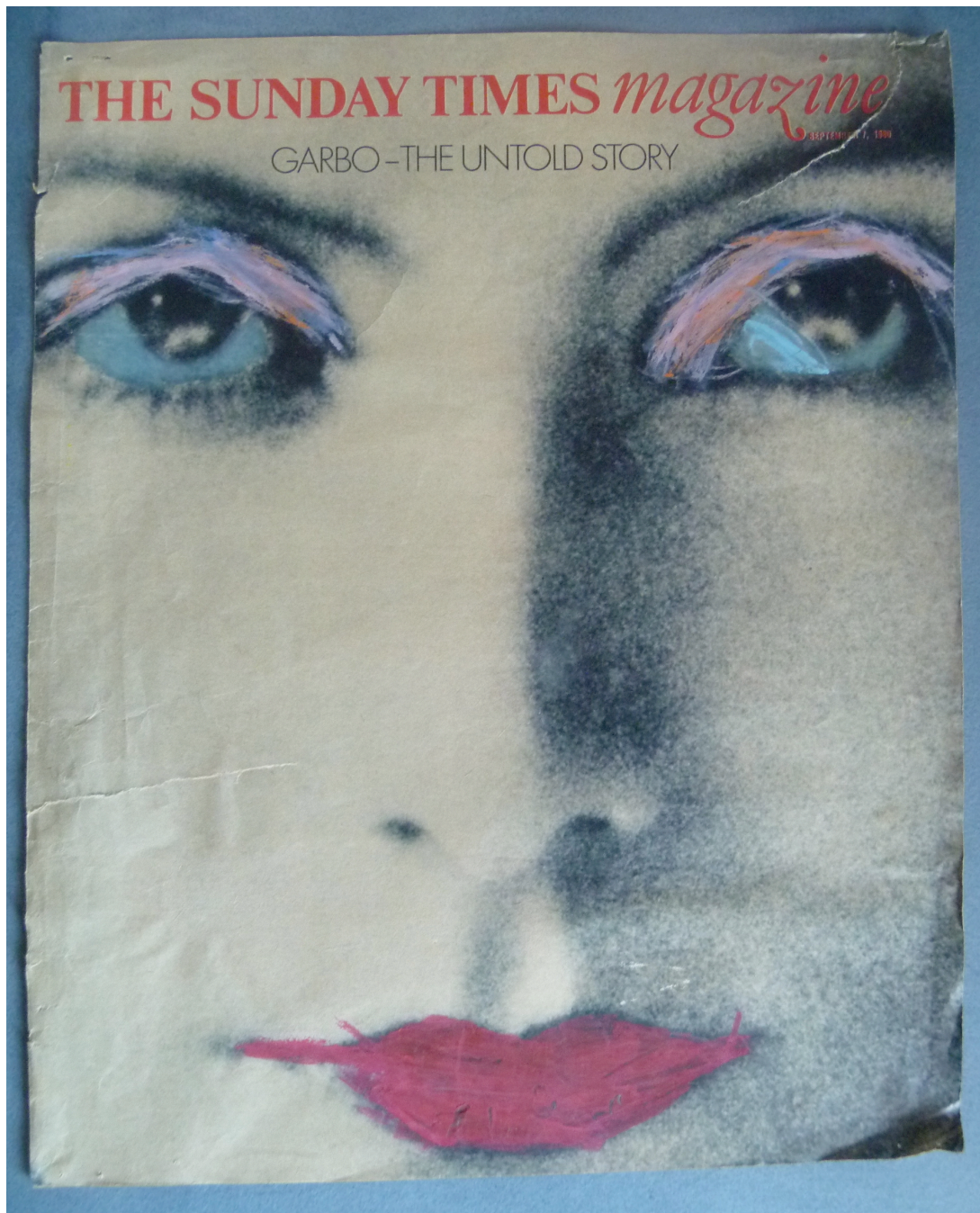


Figure 33. J. 6.6 *Garbo 1* oil pastels on paper

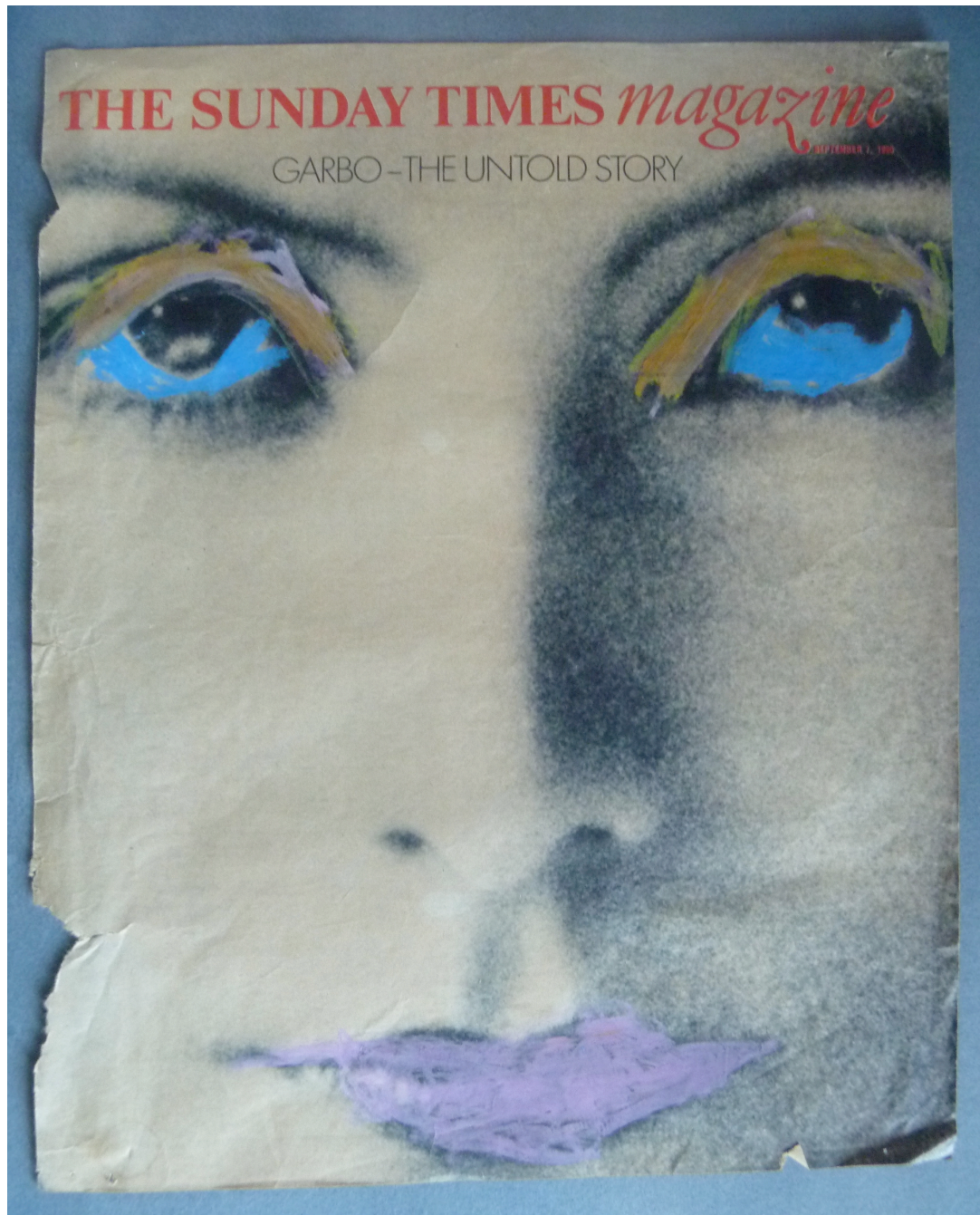


Figure 34. J. 6.6. *Garbo 2* oil pastels on paper



COMMUNICATION

Case Study 3: *Matisse-Letter*

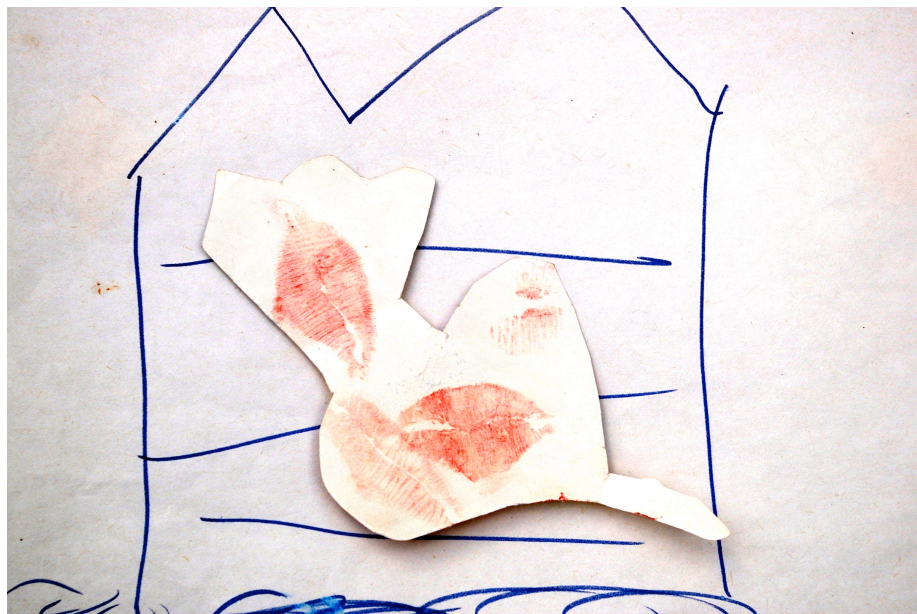


Figure 35. *Matisse-Letter* R.5.11

This case-study, and also the next ('Parcels') I have included to demonstrate not only the way in which the child has employed a number of different acts in the making of the piece: going to a place, collecting objects together, making an addition (a drawing, or folding, or a combination) and then a further act (of giving). It also follows from the previous section in the sense that, as I have already pointed out, the act of 'bringing together' involves the placing of the found object in a (made or found) 'ground', which I have linked to the meaning of the term 'gegend' as 'region' or 'domain'. It is also included to demonstrate the important role that the letter, or the parcel, both means of communicating and giving, had in the range of making strategies the children employed. It has already been made evident in the last section on drawing that one of the pieces made entirely by folding and cutting, was intended as a gift. The 'parcels' were handed to me unquestionably as gifts, and the 'Matisse-letter' was so called because it was 'posted' under the bathroom door to her father.

R was teasing her father who was in the bathroom, wanting privacy and handicapped by the fact that we had no lock on the door. This was the sequence of events: opening and shutting of door; injunctions to shut the door; door remained shut but a play of shadows beyond door, and fingers appearing in gap under door; disappearance; silence, and then image was slid under the door. This was made in a few minutes, from items found upstairs: paper probably from John's study, the drawing made with a felt-tip pen, the 'odalisque' from a 'miniature' publication on Matisse that had already been cut out by her elder sister, and which had four prints from lip-sticked mouths on the back of it (by J and her friend E).

The point at issue here again is how it came about that she found these things and put them together so quickly. What astonished and perplexed me at the time was the speed with which these were put together. Once again, if the intention occurred beforehand then the search for the necessary ingredients: the drawing of the 'ground' (a 'diagram' of a house which closely resembled our house) and cut-out, in whichever order, seems to imply a remarkably, indeed almost impossibly fortuitous coincidence of items. If once the 'odalisque' was seen, and prompted or triggered the drawing of the house, it seems more possible within the time available. That the 'odalisque' was seen 'as something' which could be used in such a way, is not something you would expect from a child of 5 years old. Did she recognise that the image is sensual if not frankly sexual, and provocative? Is this adult interpretation being carried too far? Why did these come to hand, what is this 'ready-to-hand' that is happening here? Out of all the multitude of things available, *this* was chosen and *put together with* a drawing that was made for it, and framed by it, *housed* by it.<sup>34</sup>

#### Case Study 4: *Parcels*



Figure 36. J. 6. *Parcel 1*

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<sup>34</sup> These questions I shall return to in Chapter 4.



Figure 37. J.3.6. *Parcel 1* (postcard, wooden toy bridge).

This is an example again, of a found object (the wooden 'bridge') which I shall call the 'figure', being placed not simply on, but *in* another found object, (the postcard) which provides a 'ground' for it, and is folded to form a *parcel*. It is clear immediately that the 'figure' bears a distinct relation to the 'ground' within the domain (*gegend*) 'railway'. It was clearly intended as a gift through the act of giving that marked its completion. This case study emphasizes the importance of recognising that a description of the act of making in itself is not necessarily sufficient to provide a full account of what has occurred, and what it might signify.

This was one of three 'parcels' given to me after bouts of naughtiness and tussles of will that gave every indication of being connected to jealousy over her baby sister. This culminated in a telling-off from me, and she disappeared up to her bedroom. After a prolonged silence she reappeared and handed me one of them, after which she disappeared again. Later she returned with another, and then another. They were given without any words, with an absorbed gravity, even an air of preoccupation. As far as I was concerned their intention was unmistakeable and I received them in the manner of someone who has been given a very special present. Such giving was a feature of this age and the gifts would take many forms, often as in this case with 'picture-writing' on a folded piece of paper or card, often with nothing inside, but in this case there was something, and it was the conjunction of the image and the object in this and in another of the three parcels that struck me at the time.

The postcard is of the Ravenglass to Eskdale miniature railway, acquired at a time before her sister was born when she, her father and I, visited it and travelled on it. The connection of bridge to railway seems deceptively straightforward, but that these should be put together and given in this form does seem extraordinary. Luquet observed that the subject a child draws can be stimulated by 'objets suggestifs,' which are either objects in the real world, or are drawings or images made previously by the child, by other people or seen in albums, books, catalogues, magazines etc. Many drawings are from memories of the day, or may even be from months ago, and he alludes to the fact observed by many parents that often these are recalled with precise visual detail. In this case where the precise visual detail is given in the nature of the chosen objects themselves, the question remains (as it would similarly in the case of a drawing from memory), why did she choose it? Her experience of being in the world at the time the postcard of the railway was bought, was that of an only child enjoying the undivided attention of her parents. The second parcel contained a miniature card image of a clock, and what could be taken to be a stork.





Figure 38. J.3.6. *Parcel 2* (plastic model of bird, shaped card image of clock, paper).



Is it possible that in bringing these parcels to me in this form she was telling me something, reminding me of that time? Is this a far-fetched, sentimental and excessive interpretation of what was just a gesture and no more: 'just pretending' like the picture-writing that was on it, the objects gathered randomly in order to make up the contents of a parcel, with the actual point being 'simply' that it is a parcel signifying a gift.

### *Summary*

The questions these examples pose are complicated by the fact that my interpretation can neither be confirmed nor rejected by the child, because she cannot articulate the process, and even if she could would probably say she did not know. These things were selected from a wide range of possibilities and put together, or cut, in very particular ways, which 'make sense', by which I mean they made sense to me immediately at the time, knowing as I did, the context in which the act occurred, and having a shared history with the child in which an immediate recollection of that time (on the miniature railway) was possible. Such an interpretation, a 'sense' of such a kind would not have been possible for someone (the dispassionate, objective observer) who did not have such intimate knowledge. One may retort that anything put with anything will make sense or confound sense and thus make a kind of sense out of nonsense: a surreal juxtaposition will always perhaps conjure something out of anything.<sup>xlvi</sup> But when I opened them, the combination of objects they contained 'spoke' very clearly to me: they spoke of time; of the arrival of a child; and of a very particular time *before* that, when she was the only child and had the undivided attention of her parents. Whatever interpretation can be made, there is no doubt that these example demonstrate the child's awareness of *relation between objects and between the drawing and the 'ground', and that this awareness is both spatial, and 'categorical'* (the 'house' for the figure, the 'bridge' with the railway line, the 'jack-in-the-box' hiding under the flap of the envelope).

The movement of an object from one place to another, or the transformation of it in situ, have been presented as part of a range of strategies that children use, or we could say a form of play, and often culminate in the act of giving or presenting to the parent, sibling, friend, or another close to the child.

A whole set of acts are involved in the making of these works: it is not simply the 'object' or 'outcome', but also what precedes its making, how it occurs, where it is executed, and then what follows from it. I have already alluded to *embellishment* as an addition that can transform an object (the stone ball, and *Garbo* for example). In the next case study it became clear through analyzing the images, that these were not 'simply' being decorated, or added to arbitrarily: there were differences in the manner and forms of drawing used that posed questions as to why.

*GAMES, TRANSGRESSION & THE OTHER*



Figure 39. R.5.6 *Indian* (Richard Harris): *Radio Times* Series

### Case Study 5: *Radio Times* Series

In a series of drawings which I entitled the 'Radio Times Series', that were examined closely in my Masters dissertation, I proposed that the only way in which it was possible to interpret the differences between certain kinds of marks on some of the drawings, and the nature of their inscription, was through their making being analogous to the playing of a game.<sup>xlvi</sup> Initially it is possible to see all the drawings as graffiti-like defacement, as a simple destructive act, rejecting, perhaps dismissing the images, which were perhaps seen as repulsive or were not liked for one reason or another.<sup>35</sup> On closer inspection, the 'graffiti' varies considerably, and with some images the drawn line is sensitive and explores or echoes the physiognomy of the portrait, for these are all drawings on top of reproductions in the *Radio Times* of photographs or portraits of men. This was the 'gegenstand' or ground of the drawings.<sup>36</sup> They were done spontaneously in a conspiratorial and collaborative manner by both daughters, at the ages of eight years (J) and five and a half years (R) without argument, and conducted with calm and concentration over a period of about 45 minutes, whilst on holiday and confined to the cottage, on a wet day in the Lake District.<sup>37</sup> Each drawing was made in fine blue-black fibre-tip, or dark blue biro, by each singly.

I sought to discover in my examination of the drawings therefore, whether firstly there was evidence of a response to the form of the 'found' image, secondly if there was evidence of the presence of an internal model, and thirdly of interpretation, that other essential and dynamic element where reference is made to a knowledge of form.<sup>xlvi</sup>

With a number of the drawings, the nostrils and the mouth are drilled into in an invasive fashion (Richard Harris, Adam Ant); and with some the face or the body is scribbled over. With these it appears more like what most would assume, that they are defacing the drawings, 'just' scribbling over them arbitrarily.

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<sup>35</sup> It is important to recognize that they could be seen as acts of vandalism, as purely destructive, and the child punished accordingly. When a slide of 'Charles II' was shown at one of the Derby primary schools in which I conducted a project with Creative Partnerships, to a class of year 3 pupils, some were shocked, and said it was wrong to draw on the face of a King. However when I asked what they thought of 'Medijel Man' they all said 'clown!'

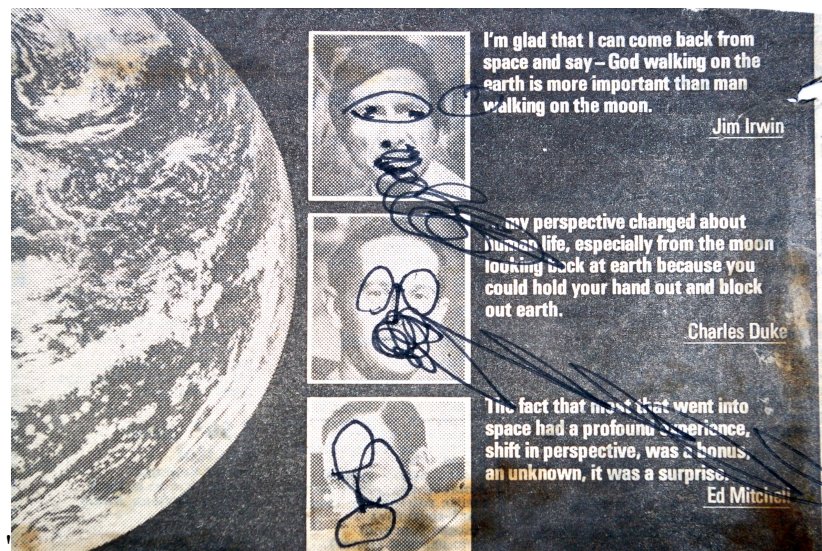
<sup>36</sup> After they had completed them I later cut them out of the magazine, a mistake that in retrospect it would have been better I had not made: at least I should have retained the whole page: a lesson for any future study of this kind.

<sup>37</sup> It will be seen, in the next section on 'Materials and Methods', that one of the most significant and surprising aspects of the 'Creative Partnerships' project, was the spontaneous formation of collaborative groups.





*Kafka*



*Astronauts*

Figure 40. J.8.0



*King Charles II*



*Adam Ant*

Figure 41. J. 8.0

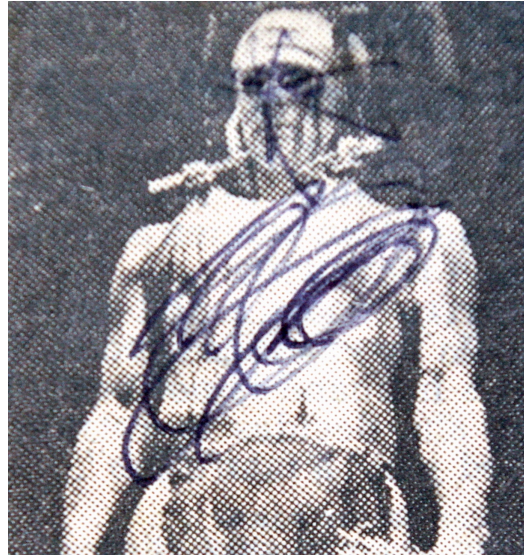


Figure 42. R. 5.6 *Indian* (detail)

Yet while the scribbling over the chest of *Indian* is like a crossing out, it is coupled with a careful drawing of a radiating form with 'spokes' rather like a spider's web over the head; and over *Kafka* and *Charles II* it seems almost like a ruminative exploration or response.

Those that provoked the most amusement were the drawings on *Kenny Rogers* and *Medijel Man*, although these are very different drawings. I wrote at length about this series in the dissertation, and therefore want only to draw attention to the proposals I felt it was necessary to make in order to understand them fully. The main questions I sought to answer are outlined on the previous page, but what triggered the decision to examine them in the first place was the question: why are they so different? Even drawings by the same child are different on each image, so it was not a simple matter of an attack on the image, or a straightforward defacement or crossing out. Neither was it a 'simple' repetitive process, ('automatisme graphique') in which the same procedure was carried out on each selected image.

On *Charles II* I wrote the following:

This example of linear tracery at times follows, at others echoes the forms within the image. In this case the lines are by no means straightforward. They do not simply outline as in other cases, and the lines above the eyebrows seem to take the forms given as cues rather than as models to be copied. They are an example of equivalence as opposed to imitation. The lines if removed from the image would not automatically imply a face at all, but stand in their own right as an abstract configuration constructed with a high degree of control and sensitivity. Here, more than in any other case, it could be claimed that the line is set free from the requirement to set forth a representation, but is able to ruminate, so to speak, upon the form upon which it will leave its trace.



No clear schema is evident. They were both at a stage of development much later than the scribbling stage, and yet they chose to use it as one of a range of drawing devices. Scribbling previously had been used for a variety of purposes: on envelopes it appears to be sometimes a crossing out or erasure of the address, or the stamp; it is used to depict water, smoke, hair, and grass in other drawings made over the period studied. The only thing that I could think of to differentiate them was the response they had to the man, for they are all male portraits (a female portrait of Judi Dench remained untouched despite being part of one image, similarly the image of an eye). Some they would have recognised (*Adam Ant*), others they clearly could not, but they each convey very different attitudes, which elicit very different responses. Interpreting the nature of the response through the nature of the drawing, it is clear that those images with more formal characteristics (*Charles II* and *Kafka*) elicit more formal, restrained drawings. In the Masters thesis I proposed that each drawing represents a relation to hypothetical figure or role; that in this relation are included modes of experience and interaction that are not purely visual; and that in the depiction of this relation other conventions or kinds of experience than the graphic are embodied in the drawing. The following kinds of interaction were proposed, but need to be seen not as mutually exclusive, but more in the manner of combinations of all types (for example I proposed that all denote a form of classification) with an emphasis on one type rather than another:

*Humour: Medijel Man* (seen as 'clown' and therefore turned into one), and *Kenny Rogers* (the addition of spectacles, combined with 'invasion').

*Transgression & Invasion*: here I made reference to what I called the 'poker-biter' game, one both children enjoyed from the age of one year to three years of age (*Adam Ant*, *Indian*).

*Exploration* - characterized by a non-invasive, meandering line which echoes the forms of the image (*Kafka* and *Charles II*). This also refers back to the tracing part of the 'poker-biter' game, in which the finger traces a passage around or down the face of the parent/ friend/ before invading the nostrils or entering the danger area of the mouth.

*Enfacement*: during the course of the MA study, in thinking about the differences I was observing, I invented the term 'enfacement', which out of curiosity I looked up, to find that it means "to stamp or print on the face of a document" (Chambers). Through this discovery I realised that the drawings may have been a kind of classification. In addition to this the prefix 'en' (from Latin through French) is used to form words with the sense of 'in, into, upon, and also with the sense 'cause to be'.

The demarcation of areas of activity and interaction that we acquire through learning about the conventions of behaviour in society are in the process of being established at this age, and in our attempts to establish them, children will test them out, if not openly defy them. It is after all a way of asserting a certain amount of autonomy. Teasing is something that

children start to do as early as one year old.<sup>38</sup> The game that I refer to in the dissertation is one which tests out the boundaries of what is permissible as well as establishing or confirming trust, that the child will not be scolded (or bitten!).

Expanded, the statement 'This is play' looks something like this: 'these actions in which we now engage do not denote what those actions for which they stand would denote'...the playful nip denotes the bite, but it does not denote what would be denoted by the bite.'<sup>1</sup>

### *Summary*

In looking at the summary of my analysis of the drawings from the Masters thesis, I have modified certain of the statements, and removed one, although they remain essentially intact, and I have added e):

- a) no identifiable 'internal model' takes precedence over the form of the found image.
- b) the drawings are integrated into the found image and display a high degree of sensitivity to its forms.
- c) no evidence of 'type-constancy' where one model is carried through all the drawings.
- d) evidence of repetition of specific graphic forms: encirclement, trace, scribble and dot
- e) evidence of differences of physical response from an invasive 'boring into' the image, through a medium weight of scribbling or additional lines, to a delicate trace.
- f) graphic forms and physical responses vary with each drawing in relation to the found image.
- g) a strong implication in certain of the responses that the child has referred to a knowledge of culturally determined roles and graphic conventions

This last point was made with reference in particular to *Medijel Man* that was analyzed in depth, the drawing on which appears to emphasize its (albeit unintended by the graphic designer) recognisably clownish aspect. I was eight years old at this time, loved watching Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd films, and understood what a clown was. In 'Medijel Man' I argued that the drawing, composed of four circles, could be seen as a form of classification: by marking out the areas of the image that could be said to be antecedently clown-like in terms of an identification of role. In relation to the earlier examination of gesture and drawing, the way in which 'alteration' of the ground, *and* the object of representation in the process of making can be read as transgression or aggression. In this series alteration that could be interpreted as destructive, through an awareness of a specific form of play well known to the children, has alternatively been interpreted as forms of categorisation, and response, which include the acting out of a game once played when they were younger.

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<sup>38</sup> At the age of one year, A when warned against poking a plug repeatedly advanced towards it with his finger whilst at the same time looking (mischievously) at his mother: behaviour all parents will recognize.



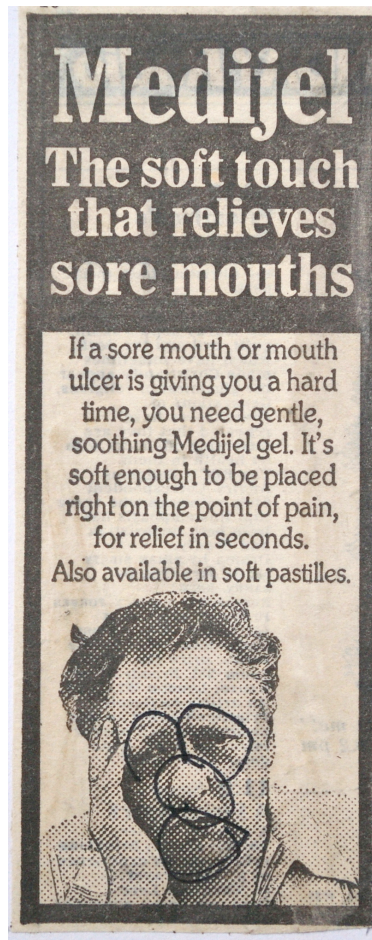


Figure 43. J. 8.0 *Medijel Man*

I do not mean by this that transgression does not come into it, but that not only is it 'contained' and/or expressed (safely) through forms of play (a reference by Bataille mentioned only briefly by Guerlac) but that it is not *simply* or *merely* destructive in the first place. In the process of alteration there has to be the recognition of a destructive element, in order for the transformative to occur - even in the removal of one thing from one domain into another; and in that process the breaking of rules may be necessary, or the transgression of convention, or of the socially acceptable. The children in their game with the characters in the *Radio Times Series* are able to invade and attack, or stroke, or play a trick on them without fear of reprisal. In the game of 'poker-biter' the adult's intention to have a conversation is effectively cut short and made impossible by the child's insistence on playing the game, but is done in a way that amuses the adults and subverts the anger it might have generated, but depends utterly on the trust that this will be the case. In examples given in the next section, 'Materials and Methods', the 'ground' will be examined, in relation to its material nature and the materials used with it, which in many cases are not usual, or are used in ways not commonly associated with them.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

A number of factors come together when examining the role and importance of materials and methods, some of which have been alluded to already. In the previous section I pointed out the way in which often, and especially amongst those who are neither practitioners nor critics, the 'figure' has predominated over the perception of the 'ground'. The relation between 'figure' and 'ground', and between the 'elements' of a composition, has been an area of critical importance to artists and critics rather than to the layperson. The emphasis on the 'integrity' of the surface through the influence of Greenberg during the period of post abstract expressionism<sup>39</sup>; the interrogation of what comprises the work of art and its relation to representation; the analogy of the process of painting made famously by Pollock, as being representative of 'nature', and not representational; all these developments fore-grounded the materials and the process as significant in themselves and as integral to the meaning of the work. I have referred earlier to the work of Hesse, Beuys, Fontana, Rainer, *Fluxus* and to *Arte Povera*. During this period the ground was laid, if you will forgive the pun, for the nature of contemporary practice, in which the materials and methodology or process, are in themselves used in such a way as to convey meaning, whether they are 'traditional' or radical, their significance and their precedents are integral to the meaning of the work.

The materials that are in evidence in these examples are much wider than those normally associated with investigations into children's 'art'. Because I had a wide variety of materials myself, and I was aware of their different qualities, I made sure that there was a wide range of materials available to the children from the beginning: different types and colours of paper, magazines, brushes, pencils, pens, felt-tips, crayons, pastels, paints, scissors, glue, dough (which I made up regularly), clay, off-cuts of wood. Whilst I was aware of, and admired the work of Schwitters,<sup>40</sup> I was not prepared for the way in which they spontaneously utilised all sorts of other materials from our day to day lives (wrappers,

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<sup>39</sup> this term is discussed at greater length in Chapter 3, 'Reflections on Practice' in the writing on the 'Horizon' series.

<sup>40</sup> Kurt Schwitters (1887 – 1948) was a member of the European Dada movement who collected and constructed collages out of everyday paper materials such as bus and tram tickets, newspapers, cheap commercial papers etc. He also constructed amorphous and abstract forms which grew in an organic way, out of the corners of a room or a space and invented the concept of 'Merz', 'the combination for artistic purposes of all conceivable materials.' He constructed a Merz Barn in Elterwater (eventually removed and re-constructed at Newcastle University by Richard Hamilton and others) after fleeing to England from Nazi persecution during the war, living in Ambleside until 1948.

matchboxes, orange peel, cardboard tubes, tissues, cardboard boxes, envelopes), from shopping (receipts), or visiting the bank (bank forms). Whilst I expected them to draw on things around the house (they were allowed to draw on their bedroom wall, to the astonishment of various friends), I did not expect them to draw in the way they did, neither did I expect to see them collect objects together, or embellish them. However *because* I was aware of the work of Schwitters, I was ready to see what they did with these scraps or objects in a way that others might not.

Orange peel was torn and drawn on; tissue was drawn on with soft pastel and then carefully separated into its two fine layers, or drawn on after it had been separated; the cardboard tube from inside the toilet roll was soaked in the bath and then attached in mosaic fashion to the side of the bath to build images (this was done by both whilst in the bath, and the same bits re-soaked and re-constructed over a period of time); or the toilet roll was carefully undone to create an extended form which was then embellished; the cardboard sleeve that contained the slides returned from Kodak is turned into a screen through which a 'movie' passes; the magazine images of Garbo are carefully embellished; the bank form is filled in with pretend writing.

As well as using and appropriating a wide range of materials, they experimented with different methods, often particular to one child or the other, or particularly favoured and repeated sometimes in the way Luquet termed 'automatisme' when a succession of images would be produced in one sitting. J for example had a particular enthusiasm for layers, whether laying paint onto a piece of paper and then laying another on top, and repeating the process with layers of paint and paper until at a certain point (usually limited by the amount of paper available) they would be peeled apart to see what had happened. She would often repeat a method, or a sequence, or use the same format and try different things with it (see drawings on tissue, 'Garbo', and 'Esso' series). As has already been seen, R was particularly interested in the envelope as a form to work with and as we have already seen, cutting and folding, as well as creating pattern. These were the 'repertoires' that characterized their approaches to the process.

The illustrations that follow are a selection of the examples in Appendix 1, which accompanies the thesis. They give an indication of the variety of materials and the selection of media used to work on them. These are in the majority of cases, media which are sympathetic to the material upon which they are used: soft pastel is used on tissue paper, thin paint is used on absorbent Chinese paper, fibre-tip pen is used on thin paper knowing it will penetrate through to the other side.



J. 5.0 (above) - oil pastels on paper. R. 3.1 (below), tissue and paper on paper.

Figure 44. Materials and Methods.





Figure 45. R. 3.0 *Flowers* pastels on torn polystyrene sheet, and pencil

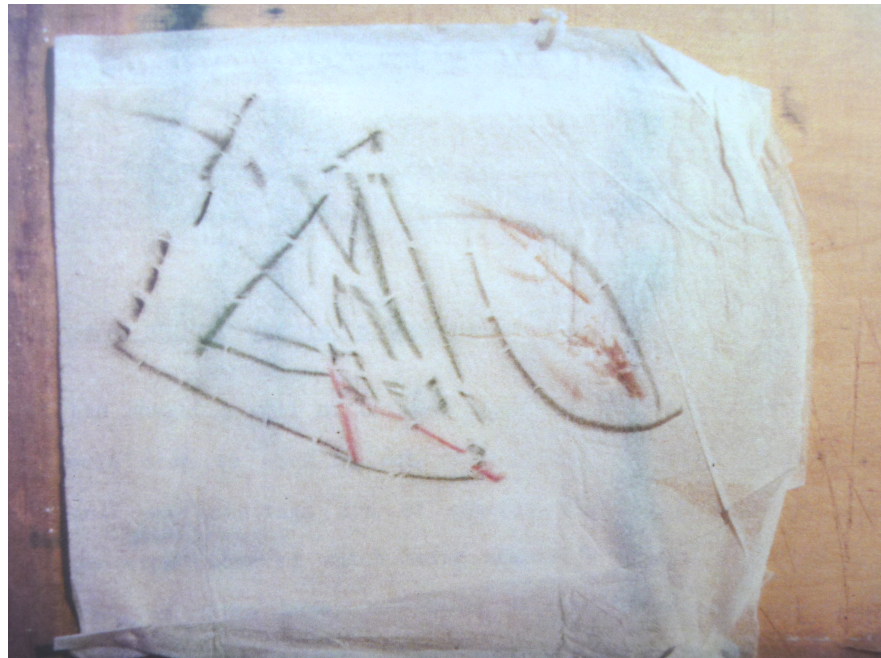


Figure 46.J. 5.0 soft pastels & oil pastel on separated tissue (same session as above)



Figure 47. R.5.0. Felt-tip on paper

Here the transparency of the paper has been used purposefully, and the first drawing provides a template for the second 'variation'. There are a number of drawings where the felt tip on thin paper has the effect of staining through to the other side, and doubling the image, so there can be seen the development of a 'method' here. What kind of medium will best work with which material or surface; the resistance a material may have, or alternatively its receptivity; the qualities it has: these are all the kinds of things that I observed the children testing out, discovering and using.

This exploration of materials was evident in the things the children did at Dale Primary School during the project I instigated there as part of my doctoral research.<sup>41</sup> I conducted a research project with the support of Staffordshire University and Creative Partnerships, in two primary schools in Derby over a period of two years from 2005-7. The project was devised to introduce an opportunity for children to respond to a range of materials in a way that was not prescribed by the teacher or by the curriculum. The full report and the article that described the project published in 'Teaching Thinking' are included in Appendices: 2, 3 and 4 that accompany the thesis, and Appendix 5 illustrates and documents the trip to Pistoia in Northern Italy that was organized by Creative Partnerships and Dale Primary School, to visit the schools there. I include here a brief résumé of the project.

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<sup>41</sup> *What If? How Children See and What Children Make of Things: Final Report on a Project initiated by Veronica West with Creative Partnerships Derby, 2009.*

## *CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS*

The project was devised to introduce an opportunity for children to respond to a range of materials in a way that was not prescribed by the teacher or by the curriculum. The following sets out the principles upon which the project was to be based:

The pilot projects were held in order to test out the feasibility of introducing into the classroom a situation in which children could do whatever they wanted with materials provided. In order to fulfil the requirements of the PhD study, it was essential that the children were not directed in any way, and that they were provided with material to which they could respond and which they could alter, add to, embellish or use in whatever way they liked. The aim was to discover how they saw the material and how they responded to it without having been given a specific aim or task.

### ***The key criteria for the pilots were the following:***

1. The teacher must not direct the child in any way.
2. The child must choose to use the materials.
3. There is no demand to complete what the child does.
4. No aim or purpose is given for the activity.
5. A sense of normality is developed i.e. the project is not treated as 'special'.
6. The children become used to the availability of the materials regularly.
7. There is a guaranteed amount of time given to it whenever it occurs.

These criteria were based on the principles I adhered to strictly during the time I cared for and observed the way my daughters engaged in visual explorations and experiments, these being:

- a) not to suggest, or place any demand on them to make any thing, or make anything that was representational.
- b) not to interrupt them or draw attention to what they were doing unless they themselves required my attention or assistance.
- c) not to ask them afterwards what the drawing was 'of' or what it was.
- d) not to reward them for what they did, but to thank them if they gave them to me, and to express genuine interest and pleasure in what they showed me or gave me.
- e) to create opportunities for them to work with a range of materials both found and acquired.



The materials I provided comprised a range of different papers, of different weights, colours and textures (some embossed and some hand-made); a range of different surfaces (for example: wood veneers, a thick rubbery material, artificial fleece, corrugated card, strips of wood, ribbon, metallic papers; a mixture of found images, postcards, newspaper cuttings); a range of pens (coloured felt-tips, fine-liners) graphite pencils, oil pastels; and some three-dimensional objects (plastic numbers, cardboard tubes, strips of wood).

The following is an account of a meeting with the teacher at Dale, who had an immediate understanding of the principles and purpose of the project:

Clare was excited by the cross-over with science as a result of one child's piece. She had chosen to work with oil pastels on a rubbery piece of material, which was already cut into a long oblong shape. On one side she had layered colours in a series of stripes to make complex mixed colours in a sequence based on the rainbow. Although the colours were not in the correct sequence, it was interesting to see that they all resulted from complex layering. On the other side she drew a picture of a rainbow. When Clare asked her why she chose that material she said 'Because it's flexible' and demonstrated by curving it into the shape of a rainbow. Her choice of the term 'flexible' Clare remarked, was unusual and significant at this age.



Figure 48(i) *Rainbow*



Figure 48 (ii) *Rainbow* Close-up and drawing on the reverse side

In addition to the cross-over with science in the recognition of specific properties like 'flexibility,' materials were chosen also for what could be deduced (though not stated) qualities such as 'fragility', and 'texture'. There were two examples of a delicate textured tissue, so delicate it had torn slightly, being chosen as a surface upon which to draw and colour in a series of overlapping circles. These were drawn in such a regular way they must have used a template (a lid or circular object) to repeat the circle.



Figure 49

Coloured pencils on textured paper, Dale Primary School Year 3

The construction illustrated on the following page, was made by a group of boys led by one who had been challenged over his bullying other boys. Around the time the project began, a session was held with his teacher and the boys he had bullied to talk about it. This construction which Clare and I found hard to decipher at first, was undertaken amicably with others without any sign of coercion on his part, and she saw it as a very positive reparative

engagement. She was surprised at the range of attachment techniques used in the piece, which made her realize they knew more than she would have expected. The boy told her later that it was intended to be a 'crane', the soft material therefore clearly forming the seat.



Figure 50. *Crane* Collaborative piece Dale Primary School Year 3

One of the most remarkable things that occurred with this group, was that they returned to the work over a period of time, knowing that it was there ready to be picked up when they wanted to. So it was therefore with this piece that it emerged over a period of two, to three weeks. It reveals the importance of the children not being placed under any pressure to complete work by a certain time, or explain what it is until they are ready themselves to talk about it, or to show it.

The examples shown above indicate that the children had an awareness of the compatibility of media and materials (soft pastels on tissue), and qualities of materials (texture, flexibility). Clare the teacher at Dale Primary School, commented that what the children did revealed a greater knowledge of how to work with and join materials together, than she would have expected at the stage they were officially at, and that the prescriptive teaching methods that dominate the delivery of the national curriculum, make it impossible to find out *what they already know*. Other important observations are recorded in my report, but some of the most important were that the children who opted to participate never argued over any of the materials; they often chose spontaneously to work collaboratively in pairs or in groups; they

never wanted to stop, or became bored; they never asked what they should do next, or if what they were doing was 'finished'; they took things out and put things away carefully; and they returned to them repeatedly over a period of time.

However, the constraints and demands of the national curriculum were felt to be such in one school, it was impossible for them to give it the time it needed. One of the most interesting findings for me, was the teachers' varying degrees of anxiety about releasing control over a situation for which they had responsibility, and in which they felt such pressure to achieve specified results (as I articulated in the article for *Teaching Thinking & Creativity*).

Another result I had not anticipated was the children spontaneously working in collaborative groups, in order to assist, construct, try things out, and solve problems: it provides evidence of both 'circumspection' in the sense in which Luquet meant it, and the importance of interaction with others in the process.

The visit to Pistoia, which came out of the Creative Partnerships project, demonstrated how a rich variety of materials and objects, found, raw, manufactured and re-cycled can become part of a 'legible environment' in which the ordering and classification of objects is displayed in such a way that through their accessibility, the children are able to create their own combinations and meanings out of them. The pedagogy is one that harnesses the child's way of 'making things out', and it is the 'filo conduttore', the path children *find for themselves*, that determines the projects they pursue. My observations on the architecture and organization of the space of the schools and centres we visited, became the basis for the paper that was presented at the CE8 Conference<sup>42</sup> in Oxford in July 2012.

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<sup>42</sup> 'Architecture, Space and Pedagogy in Pistoia', CE8 'Creative Engagements: Thinking with Children, Oxford, July 2012.

## STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE

In this section I want to draw attention to activities that underlie or relate to the process of making in the sense that the process is part of a larger set of actions or behaviour that may relate to it in some way, or may accompany, precede, or follow from it. I have already posited that the 'Radio Times' series could in part be related to the playing of a game, which although it did not directly precede or follow the making of the drawings, has specific sequences of action that bear a striking resemblance to the sequences that enter into the making of the drawings.

'Round and round the garden ' is one such game which I play with Ben from infancy and about which he makes a drawing.....It is a useful example because it shows the child's combination of two ways of thinking about the movement of objects through time and space: as a continuous linear movement; and as a series of discrete displacements in space and time..... These are translated onto the painting and drawing surface, in rhythmical plays in which the brush or pencil pursues a rhythmic beating path across the drawing or painting surface.<sup>43</sup>

Before this paragraph, Matthews writes:

Many accounts of the development of children's drawing seem to assume that some of the children's actions described above are simply irrelevant to drawing proper....all such actions are usually considered 'over-inclusive' actions, extraneous to the drawing act proper (Laszlo and Broderick, 1985).<sup>li</sup>

For the Masters dissertation I constructed a taxonomy of the making *processes* I observed the children use, but in the course of this writing, I have realized that in many cases these cannot be separated from a 'strategy' or a larger set of actions which go beyond the act or acts of making, and which often link, as has been demonstrated, to repeated or established 'ways of going about' making or *being* itself. By this, I mean that these 'ways' became integrated with ways of being in the world: going upstairs to the 'office', going outside and coincidentally having chalk, then seeing stone. Indeed the spontaneous nature of many of these acts challenges the use of the term 'strategy', when they could more accurately be called *responses*, but it is perhaps appropriate when the child decides to be in a particular place and know that certain things will be there, and can be done.

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<sup>43</sup> It is important to point out here, the close comparison that can be drawn between this example and the making of 'Clapsong Painting' (see page 76).



My initial taxonomy included the following:

1. Appropriation.

a) Appropriation of objects: objects/grounds that *remain in situ* and are transformed into sign by addition (drawing or colouring): (Embellishment).

b) Appropriation of objects: objects are transformed into signs by being *collected and placed together* (Assemblage)

c) Appropriation of and addition to objects: where an object or objects are *collected together and are worked upon*.

d) Appropriation of materials: the use of *unusual, or the unusual use of materials* (sometimes coincident with some of the above but not always).

This group (above) in particular, involved actions and materials that would not normally be considered to be worthy of study. The other way of working with or responding to objects in the world that is rarely included is 'embellishment'.<sup>44</sup>

2. Repetition/ Automatism (including basic printing and layering).

3. Cutting, Folding.

4. Embellishment.

5. Drawing - use of line and colour using dry materials.

6. Painting.

7. Modelling.

8. Collage/ Assemblage.

I then identified actions that would occasionally accompany, or follow the above:

9. Performance - sometimes.

10. Giving - often a concluding act.

It is most important to this aim of the thesis that the reader bears in mind that *none* of the examples can nor should be separated from the way in which they came about. They were made sometimes in private, sometimes alone, sometimes in company, sometimes in collaboration, and all of these contexts and the behaviours that accompanied them, are of relevance.

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<sup>44</sup> Illustrations of which are included in 'Ground and Context, p. 113.

## Case Study 6: *The Office: Esso Blue Series & Telephone*



Figure 51. J 4.6 - 5.4 *Esso Blue Series*

All the examples shown in this case study were done on a black wooden box upstairs in J's bedroom, which she called her office. Other 'office' type things occurred here like the filling in of forms, whether actual or drawn. Lists of any kind, and columns, to be filled in, were a source of continual fascination and concentrated attention. Any visit to the bank always necessarily included the filling in of whatever forms were available whilst waiting in the queue, something which I have observed other parents being grateful for. The context was very much the imitation of the adult at work, or engaged in the serious business of calculation or itemisation: the girls played cards with their father a lot, and for J keeping the score was a key part of the enjoyment. There are altogether 66 of these drawings and experiments with this repeated format, from more than one pad given her by our oil delivery man. They are an exceptionally clear example of what Luquet termed 'automatisme graphique',

Jessica  
Current account credit

Date 1/11/11

Account Ullis

Cashier's stamp and initials

Total Cash 21

Total Cheques 21

Amount £ 21

TO BE RETURNED TO CUSTOMER

Date 1/11/11

**Lloyds Bank Limited**  
**Current account credit**  
COMPLETE IN BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

Account holding branch Ullis

Account in name of Ullis

Account Number 11111111

Paid in by: Ullis

Cashier's stamp and initials

Notes: £20 1

£10 1

£5 1

£1 1

Coins: 50p 1

Silver 1

Bronze 1

Total of Cash 21

Cheques etc. 21

Total of Cheques 21

£ 21

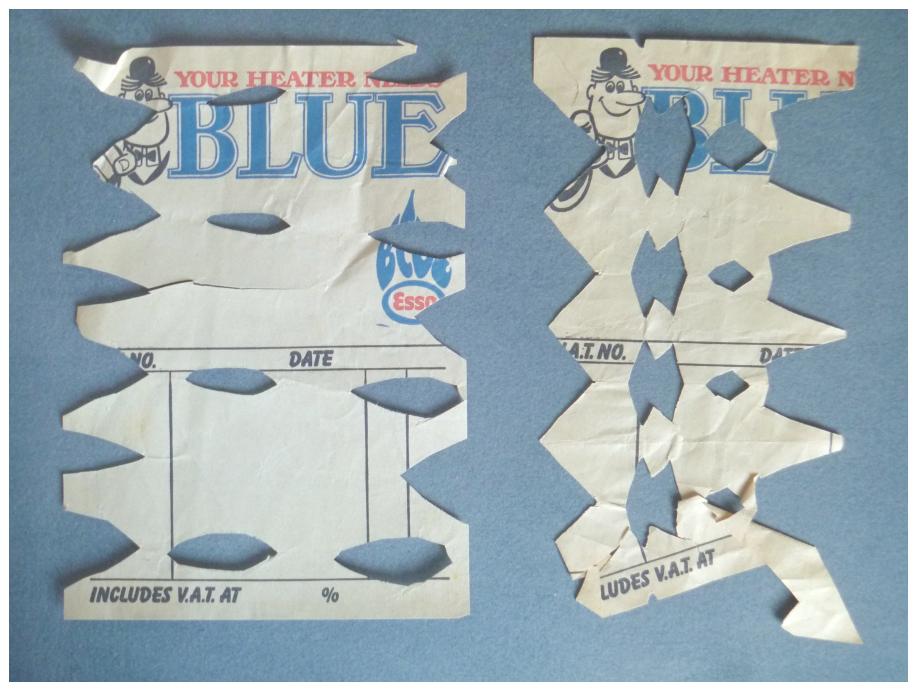


Figure 52. J.4.2 - 5.0 Office





Figure 53.

J.4.2 - 5.0 Esso Blue Series - drawings on right are on back of sheet to the left



Figure 54. J. 4.6 - 5.4 *Office Telephone & Tipex* <sup>45</sup>

As well as the filling in and the drawing out of forms and lists, there was another activity that occurred over a prolonged period of time in the 'office'. This involved the use of cast off bottles of 'tipex', which were given her by her father, who was simultaneously working upstairs in his study, and attempting to write a dissertation. These were the days of the typewriter and the need for masking fluid. The bottles had a little brush in them, and the white (by then often rather sticky) remnants were painted onto a black Bakelite telephone that had been given her to give her 'office' an air of authenticity. Layers were applied over a period of months.

This was a rather mysterious process, again carried out privately upstairs, and seemed to be a necessary part of being there. In the Masters thesis I suggest that this may have been, rather like the scribbling out of the name and address on letters we received, a kind of disappearing of the telephone: the removal of something that captured their parents' attention on a regular basis. It may also have simply been a fascination with the process of painting it on with a little brush and seeing what it looked like. She was particularly interested in the process of layering and the results, which came about for example, through painting onto a sheet of

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<sup>45</sup> This object in particular links to the experimentation I have been engaged in the practice element of this enquiry, by taking the process of 'coating layers' using not tipex, but gesso (also white).

paper and then laying another on top, and repeating the process: the layers would then be taken apart to reveal what was really a kind of print.

The inclusion of the results of an action that produced this visual result, yet which was never presented to either of us as a piece of work in the way in which other artefacts were given to us (this applies to all of the 'Office' material), which through such an act appeared to denote both its completion, and a thing worth giving, may seem to overstep the boundary of what constitutes a 'work'. However it is not so, if we take into account the alternative radical approaches to what a 'work' is, and can be, as it was interrogated through approaches like those by artists associated with *Fluxus* or *Arte Povera* described in Part 1 on 'Process'.

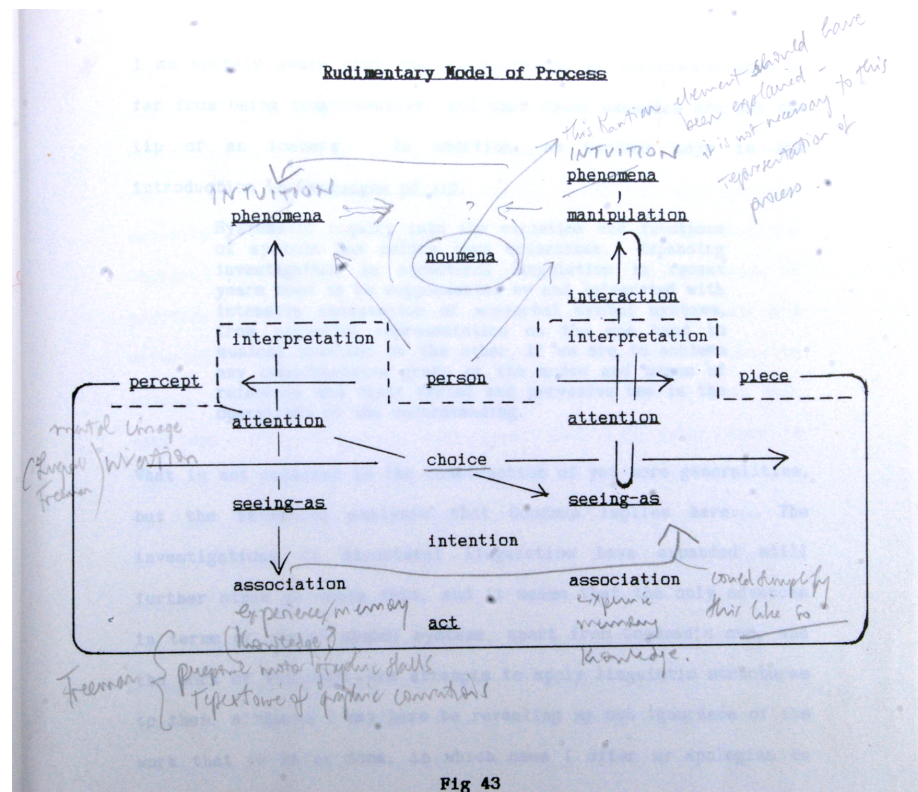


Figure 55.<sup>46</sup>

The illustration above was a possible diagram of process I arrived at by the end of the Masters thesis (with pencil additions made during later researches). It can be seen that the 'person' is placed at the centre of the diagram, with interpretation occurring *in the act of perception*, equally to that which occurs *after* and *in the process* of making. Manipulation and interaction can occur in a circular manner as in automatism, and the line which connects the piece back to the percept around the bottom of the diagram indicates the serial nature of many of the examples included in the thesis of both the children's work and my own. The revised diagram on the following page retains the basic relation of 'percept', 'person' and 'piece', but with revised terms and dynamics and re-inserts 'mobilité d'esprit'.

<sup>46</sup> V.M. West *An Enquiry into Process and Representation in the Visual Works of Young Children*, A Dissertation in Part Fulfilment of M.A. in Art Education CNA, Birmingham Polytechnic 1989. Fig. 43

## REVISED MODEL OF PROCESS

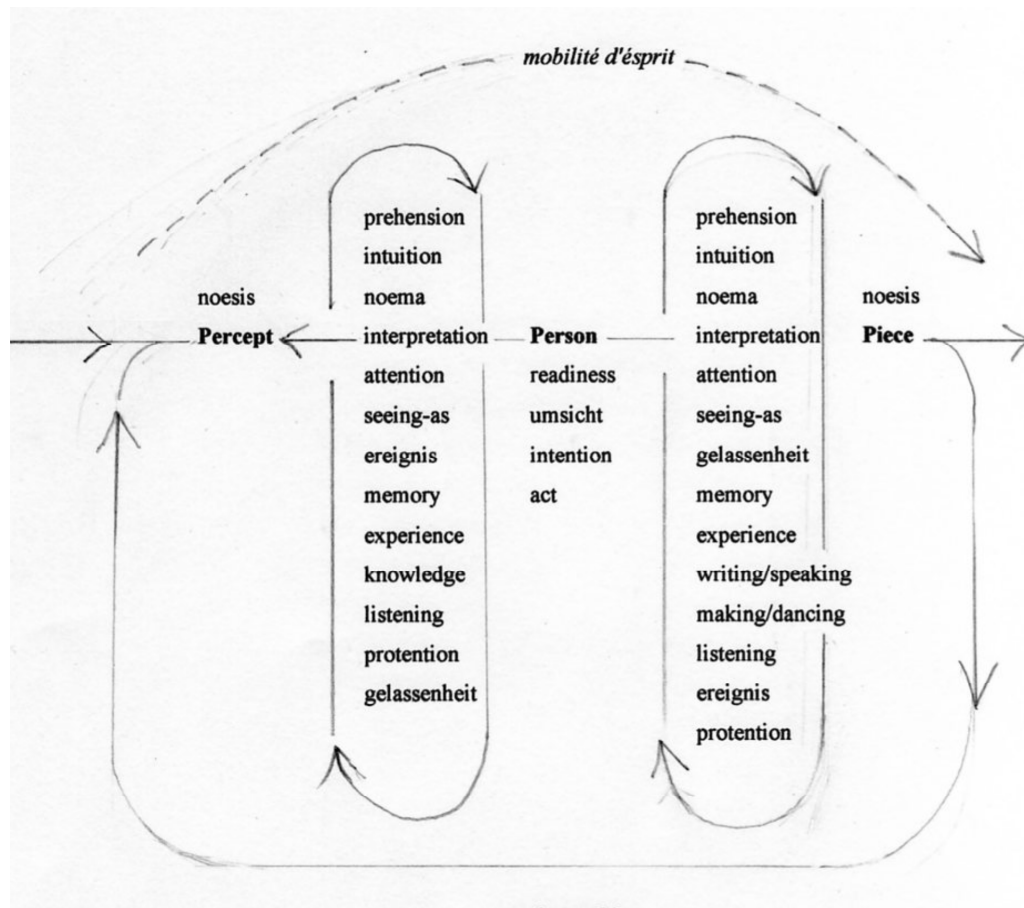


Figure 56.

In this version of process the terms have been revised to include those that have been or will be referred to in the text from phenomenology, and the arrows indicate additional dynamics, which emphasize the interaction between percept, person and piece (work) as going both ways, as well as in a circular fashion. The percept may be either immanent or transcendent.



## SUMMARY

Through the presentation and analysis of the examples in the first part of this chapter, I have sought to show how it may be possible to build on Luquet's observations to establish a fuller model of process. These examples reveal a fluid transposition between different types of interaction with material, with others, and with the world. Drawing and making, I hope I have demonstrated, are part of a repertoire, often combined with other expressive and imaginative acts, with play and performance, in their exploration of their world, and in the process of, to borrow from Luquet, 'forging' themselves. What children make comes out of a relationship with world that is intense, 'interladen', 'charged.'<sup>lii</sup>

I have pointed out the need to include a much fuller recognition of a range of types of drawing and making and their relation to a wider context in which the 'ground', materials and media, and forms of interaction and transformation in terms of act, gesture and performance are recognised as possessing signification in their own right. This context has to include the full range of contemporary fine art practice, and an understanding of how it has come about. Children, as well as exploring their world, are equally engaged in the process of exploring and comprehending the nature of those with whom they live, upon whom they are utterly dependent, adult behaviour, and the culture's symbolic forms, as well as finding and forming themselves in relation to them.

Winnicott articulated vividly the way the baby's 'maximally intense experiences' are 'in the potential space between the subjective object and the object objectively perceived, between the me-extensions and the not-me'.<sup>liii</sup> This is the space he claims, where cultural experience is located. It is the space in which imaginative play is situated: where the nature of things, what they are and what they can imaginatively be, where this doubling of the actual and the possible are combined.

The possibility that the child's relation to the process is one that includes affect is not explored by Luquet: and neither is the notion that the child may be communicating something to another which cannot be spoken, not only because the child has not the words, but for other reasons that the child has a sense of but cannot articulate. The 'found object' offers the child the possibility of using those things that the object is capable of denoting, and relieves them of the burden of having to construct an image 'to be creative into and with' to quote Winnicott; indeed I hope it has become evident through these examples, that the idea of their being an 'intention' beforehand, that is then simply carried out, is very far from the reality of what is happening here. What is evident is an interaction in which it could be

said that as Luquet said, the objects 'propose' or materials 'show' the child what they might do, and their response is one which is sympathetic, or compatible, or teasing, or combative, and which enters understandingly into that which is offered.

Whilst Luquet recognises what the child is achieving in the constructs of 'Intellectual Realism', in 'forging their mental structure', and furthermore asserts the validity of those constructs, the elements that he identified are limited by the narrow constraints he put upon the nature of the objects of representation and the range of materials and media he observed children use.

The *Matisse-letter* poses questions not only about the nature of its 'coming into being', but also *because of the behaviour that accompanied it*, an awareness of sensuality in an image, as well as an awareness of it as a way of teasing her father, that challenges the level of understanding that it is considered children of this age are capable of. Similarly, *Parcels* posed similar questions about the nature of their 'coming into being' in the meanings they conjured that were (to me) in the case of two of them, instantly recognisable, but once again appeared to me well beyond the capabilities of a child of that age. The *Radio Times* Series of drawings I argued, could be seen as a form of classification, as well as a transposition of the bodily interaction between themselves and others involved in playing a specific game, that tested boundaries and included elements of transgression.

These examples reveal a fluid transposition between different types of interaction with others, and with the material world, and the role that drawing and making in this full sense, can play in its exploration and expression. Those examples that show drawings or other types of act upon already extant images or objects can reveal how the nature of the acts upon them may be determined by other types of intention, or response, by relieving the child of the necessity of creating the image, and also by providing something that has its own character already. The 'ready-made' already has a 'world' in which it is situated.

These examples demonstrate that forms of classification, or recognitions of role were incorporated in, or determined, what they made of things. What they made *of* them and what they made them *into*; what they saw them *as*; and what they then *became*. The deeper levels of meaning that I have implied in my interpretation (of the *Parcels* in particular) have to remain at the level of my interpretation, for they can never be proved. The link between the bridge and the railway is very clear however. What children can show us, through the fluidity of the connections they make between things, is that links can be made which are unexpected yet apt. The evidence is clear in my view, from that provided by Luquet, and the examples provided in this thesis, that children possess the ability to perceive things in a categorial fashion from a very early age. What is more they make correspondences and

analogies between and across categories that are logical ('stand' orange, the red that is an 'octave' higher). Furthermore, and most important of all in relation to the key question of the thesis, what is the significance of the immediacy by which the key examples that I have given (*Matisse Letter* and *Parcels*), came about? For, they implied a recognition rather than a search, an already 'knowing' perception rather than one which was seeking. Not only do they imply it, it is hard to conceive of how they could have come about otherwise. Where does this fore-knowing come from?

These additional elements that I have drawn attention to are not additional in the sense that they are secondary to, or an elaboration upon what has already been observed in what children do in this sphere, but are in my view, essential to a proper understanding of what the child is capable of, and what their purpose is in doing what they do. This is not only for the sake of a fuller understanding of what children make of things, but for the sake of a better comprehension of the work of the artist and its relation to other forms of human endeavour. Yet more fundamentally it is in order to gain a fuller understanding of how we see and experience our world and others. I have been particularly concerned to enquire into what happens when something is seen in such a way that in a moment it is seen as a significant complete whole; or together with it there occurs the extra-perceptual or supra-perceptual insight that here is something of the utmost importance despite not yet knowing what it is. The image that occurs in the mind, vivid, unsought, that will become a work, or the recognition that this 'almost something' needs only something else to become what it almost is, even though we do not yet know what that something else is, but we know we shall recognise it when we see it. What is this already formed that occurs in such a moment as this? The term 'intuition' has already been alluded to and Husserl's use of the term explicated to a limited degree, but it will be returned to in Chapters 3 and 4. The identification by Husserl of what he termed 'categorical intuition', is in my view, a form of intuition that holds the key to the way in which things are seen 'as' one thing, or, as well as, another.

In Chapter 3, I shall first of all, give an account of the different phases of the relation between my own practice and my observations of the children's making processes as they have progressed through the time I have been studying them. This will be followed by an account of, and reflections on, the experimentation and development of ideas in practice that have formed an integral part of my doctoral study. I then take up the questions I have raised above in relation to forms of intuition as defined by phenomenology in relation to my own practice. These 'moments' did not occur in the same way, with an immediate 'outcome' as in the case of the *Matisse Letter* and *Parcels*, but they were immediate in being the beginning of a process, which persisted (and still persists) over a period of time. This 'persistence' over prolonged periods of time is one of the factors that distinguishes the process as it is practiced by the adult



artist, in their exploration of an idea, but immediacy and improvisation are also key components of contemporary practice, and these are both characteristics of the child's approach. Children, as has been pointed out earlier, do persist with ideas, forms and methods, as has been demonstrated (*The Office*) and these can persist over some considerable time, but coupled with the adult artist's persistence is a conscious relation to the domain of fine art, and a positioning within it, as well as a much more advanced repertoire of skills. These differences as well as similarities will be examined further in Chapter 4.

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<sup>i</sup> Green C., (2005) *Picasso, Architecture and Vertigo*. Newhaven and London: Yale University Press,

<sup>ii</sup> Wollheim R., (1970) *Art and its Objects*, London: Pelican, 53.

<sup>iii</sup> Wollheim R., (1970) *Art and its Objects* 140-141

<sup>iv</sup> Wollheim R., (1970) *Art and its Objects* 141. Wollheim here is adapting the title used by Henri Focillon, 'The Life of Forms in Art' who assigned 'a kind of impetus or quasi- evolutionary efficacy to the forms themselves, distinct from human agency'. p.140

<sup>v</sup> C. Green, (2005) *Picasso, Architecture and Vertigo*, p.212.

<sup>vi</sup> Wollheim R., (1970) *Art and its Objects*, London: Pelican. p.114.

<sup>vii</sup> Huelsenbeck R., (1961) 'DADA and Existentialism' in *DADA, Monograph of a Movement*, Verkauf W., (ed) London: Alec Tiranti Ltd., 2nd Edition, p.54.

<sup>viii</sup> Bataille G., (1930) 'L'Art Primitif' in *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris 1970), vol.1, was first published in *Documents 7, deuxième année* pp.389 - 97.

<sup>ix</sup> Guerlac S., (1996) 'Bataille in Theory: Afterimages (Lascaux)' *Diacritics* (Summer) Vol 26. No.2 'Georges Bataille: An Occasion for Misunderstandings' pp 6 - 17. John Hopkins University Press.

<sup>x</sup> for a clarification of the complex development and utilization of this term by Heidegger see pp. xviii - xxi in Hofstadter's Introduction to his translation of *Poetry, Language, Thought* New York, London: Harper Perennial Modern Thought 2013, originally published New York: Harper Row, 1971.

<sup>xi</sup> Heidegger M., (2013) *Poetry, Language, Thought* Hofstadter A., (trans.). New York, London: Harper Perennial Modern Thought, xix.

<sup>xii</sup> 'The first reductionism of the Minimalist movement may be paraphrased through a characteristic statement Ad Reinhardt made in 1962: "The one object of fifty years of abstract art is to present art-as-art and as nothing else, to make it into the one thing it is only, separating it and defining it more and more, making it purer and emptier," ("Purer and emptier" sounds like one of Andy Warhol's celebrations of boredom.) But the fact that most of the participants in *Primary Structures* also produced a great deal of theory to account for objects which did not, so to speak, wear their arthood on their faces, proves that they did not *simply* make simple objects'.....'Minimalism could exist as art only when there was the ascent to self-consciousness which Greenberg made so central to Modernism. The objects could have existed whenever in history the materials were available. But they could hardly have existed as *art* before the 1960s'. (Arthur C. Danto, "Minimalism and Minimalia", in *Minimalia, An Italian Vision in 20th-Century Art*, 1999, Edited by Achille Bonito Oliva Electa, Milan). Danto's essay points out the difference between the Italian artists and the Minimalists in New York, and the former's less reductive, more inclusive range of practice which was not defined so clearly as a movement, nor attracted the same degree of allegiance.

<sup>xiii</sup> Smithson R., (1968) 'A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects' *Artforum* New York, September pp.82 - 91.

<sup>xiv</sup> Holt N., (ed) (1979) *The Writings of Robert Smithson* New York, pp.132-3.

<sup>xv</sup> Celant G., (trans) (1969) *Art Povera, Conceptual, Actual or Impossible Art?* London. 1969, pp.225-230

<sup>xvi</sup> Matthews J., (1999) *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning*, London: RoutledgeFalmer, p.31.

<sup>xvii</sup> Wollheim R. (1970) *Art and its Objects*, London: Pelican. 53 (pp139 - 141)

<sup>xviii</sup> Segal J., (1992) *The Life of Melanie Klein* London: Sage Publications, 13.

<sup>xix</sup> Segal J., (1992) *The Life of Melanie Klein*, p.16.

<sup>xx</sup> Winnicott D.W., (1971) *Playing and Reality*. London & New York: Routledge. I refer here especially to Chapter 7 'The Location of Cultural Experience', pp.95 - 103.

<sup>xxi</sup> Winnicott D.W., (1971) *Playing and Reality*, p.97. Winnicott's own footnote here refers to his

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- original paper *Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena*' 1951.
- xxii Winnicott D.W., (1971) *Playing and Reality*, p.100.
- xxiii Winnicott D.W., (1971) *Playing and Reality* 1971,p. 101.
- xxiv Winnicott D.W., (1971) *Playing and Reality* 1971,p. 101.
- xxv West V., (1989) '*An Enquiry into Process and Representation in the Visual Works of Young Children*' a dissertation in part fulfilment of M.A. in Art Education, 1989, Birmingham Polytechnic pp. 73 - 74.
- xxvi Matthews J., (1999) *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning*, London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- xxvii Matthews J., (1999) *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning*,p. 49.
- xxviii Matthews J., (1999) *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning*,p. 38.
- xxix Macaan C., (1993) '*Edmund Husserl*' *Four Phenomenological Philosophers*, London: Routledge. p. 25.
- xxx Macaan C., (1993) '*Edmund Husserl*' *Four Phenomenological Philosophers*, pp. 9 - 10.
- xxxi Rawson P., (1979) *Seeing through Drawing* London: BBC p23.
- xxxii Winnicott D.W., (1971) *Playing and Reality*. London & New York: Routledge,p. 101.
- xxxiii Rawson P. (1969) *Drawing*, Oxford University Press.
- xxxiv Guerlac S.,(2007) '*The Useless Image: Bataille, Bergson, Magritte*' *Representations* Vol 97, No 1, (Winter) pp.28 - 56.
- xxxv Krauss R.,(1985) '*Corpus Delecti*', *October* 33 (Summer)p. 43.
- xxxvi Bataille G., (1970) *L'Art Primitif, Oeuvres Complètes*, 12 Vols., Paris, p.253 (trans.Guerlac).
- xxxvii Guerlac S., (2007) '*The Useless Image: Bataille, Bergson, Magritte*', *Representations* Vol 97, No 1, (Winter) pp.28 - 56.
- xxxviii Guerlac S., '*The Useless Image: Bataille, Bergson, Magritte*'. p.39.
- xxxix Luquet G-H., (2001) *Children's Drawings ('Le Dessin Enfantin')* Costall trans. London, New York: Free Association Books §91, p.147.
- xl Levinas E., (1995) *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, p.19.
- xli Koepelin D.,(1988) *Joseph Beuys: The Secret Block for a Secret Person in Ireland*, Bastian H (ed), Munich: Berlin Catalogue, p.9.
- xlii Henri Matisse in Andre Lejard, "Propos de Henri Matisse", *Amis de l'art*, no.2, (October 1951). Translated by Jack Cowart, 'Introductions' in Cowart et al., *Henri Matisse Paper Cut-Outs*, p.17
- xliii The Tate Gallery 1984-86: Illustrated Catalogue of Acquisitions Including Supplement to Catalogue of Acquisitions 1982-84, London: Tate Gallery 1988, pp.254-5.
- xliv Rainer A.,(1971)*Face Farces*, exh. cat., Galerie Ariadne, Vienna - Cologne, p.5.
- xlvi *Cassell's German-English Dictionary*.(1976) London: Cassell & Co.
- xlvi Levinas E.,(1995) *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*, 2nd Edition, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press 1995, p.80.
- xlvi See the essay 'Poetry and Psychoanalysis' from *Promises, Promises*, Adam Phillips (2000)London: Faber and Faber Ltd. I am acutely aware that it is not necessary to find further meaning beyond the act of giving which was clearly evident as having meaning in and for itself. It is salutary to take note of Phillips discussion of Winnicott's warning to psychotherapists of the impatient seeking for meaning from the patient's free-associating: 'There is Winnicott suggests a need for nonsense that is every bit as crucial – and sometimes more so – than our need for sense and meaning. In this scenario free association is an end in itself, and the need for meaning is linked to a kind of vigilant, and despairing self-holding.' p.29.
- xlvi West V., (1985) *An Enquiry into Process and Representation in the Visual Works of Young Children*. A dissertation in part fulfillment of MA in Art Education, 1989, Birmingham Polytechnic. Chapter II 'Defacement-Enfacement', and Chapter III 'The Role of Gesture and the Game of Poker-Biter' pp.28 - 80.
- xlvi West V., (1985)*An Enquiry into Process and Representation in the Visual Works of Young Children*.p. 32
- l Bateson G., (1973) *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, London: Paladin p.152.
- li Matthews J., (1999) *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning*, London: Falmer Press, 98.
- lii Heidegger M., (1982) *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Hofstadter A., (trans.) Indiana University Press, p.171.
- lii Winnicott D.W.,(1991) *Playing and Reality* London: Routledge p.100.

## CHAPTER 3

### *REFLECTIONS ON PRACTICE*

*Series and Materials in Process*

*Forms of Intuition*

## Introduction

In the first part of this chapter I draw attention to an aspect of practice that I had already developed by the time I was observing what the children were making, and has continued throughout the time since: the process of working in series. I then write about how what the children made influenced my own work during the period of their early years; the experimentation with materials and processes that I derived from the resulting taxonomy (referred to in Chapter 2); and the development of ideas that materialized as a result. In the second part of the chapter, I examine the nature of *intuition* and *attention* and their role in process.

The Masters did not include reflection on, or development of ideas in my own practice, and so this further research has provided the opportunity to look back and evaluate what occurred then in relation to my own practice. This was begun in part when I was invited by Sudbury Hall in 2003 to exhibit my work, and on visiting the Hall the fact that it incorporated the 'Museum of Childhood' became a factor in what I chose to exhibit.<sup>1</sup>

As I wrote earlier, I was not interested in copying what the children did. I saw no point in mimicking their imagery. It seemed a deliberate falsehood to even attempt it, and doomed to failure. How could an adult go back to the time when she was a child without the consciousness of an adult? During my time studying for the doctorate I have struggled with this issue but in time realized that I could appropriate their materials and processes, without attempting to mimic their imagery. This has resulted in a 'series of series' of explorations.

The notion of a series, as a particular form of practice in which permutations or variations are generated through the exploration of a constant theme, is a form of process in itself. The extent to which the variations are generated through systems, and how the system is determined may vary enormously, but the principle of working in series has come to be almost a *sine qua non* of contemporary practice.

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<sup>1</sup> Solo Exhibition of paintings by Veronica West - '*Reprise*', Sudbury Hall, April - May, 2003. The exhibition was entitled '*Reprise*' because it re-visited the time I spent at Alsop-en-le-Dale in Derbyshire, and the paintings I worked on there at the same time that I was studying the things my daughters were making. I used the same format and principles upon which the paintings then were based: a square format, the use of oils, and images drawn from memory of the immediate environs around the farm and the places we would walk. In the process of working on these paintings I realized to what extent the children's way of working had influenced me at the time, and decided to incorporate as part of the exhibition, images and accompanying text, of examples of the things they did.

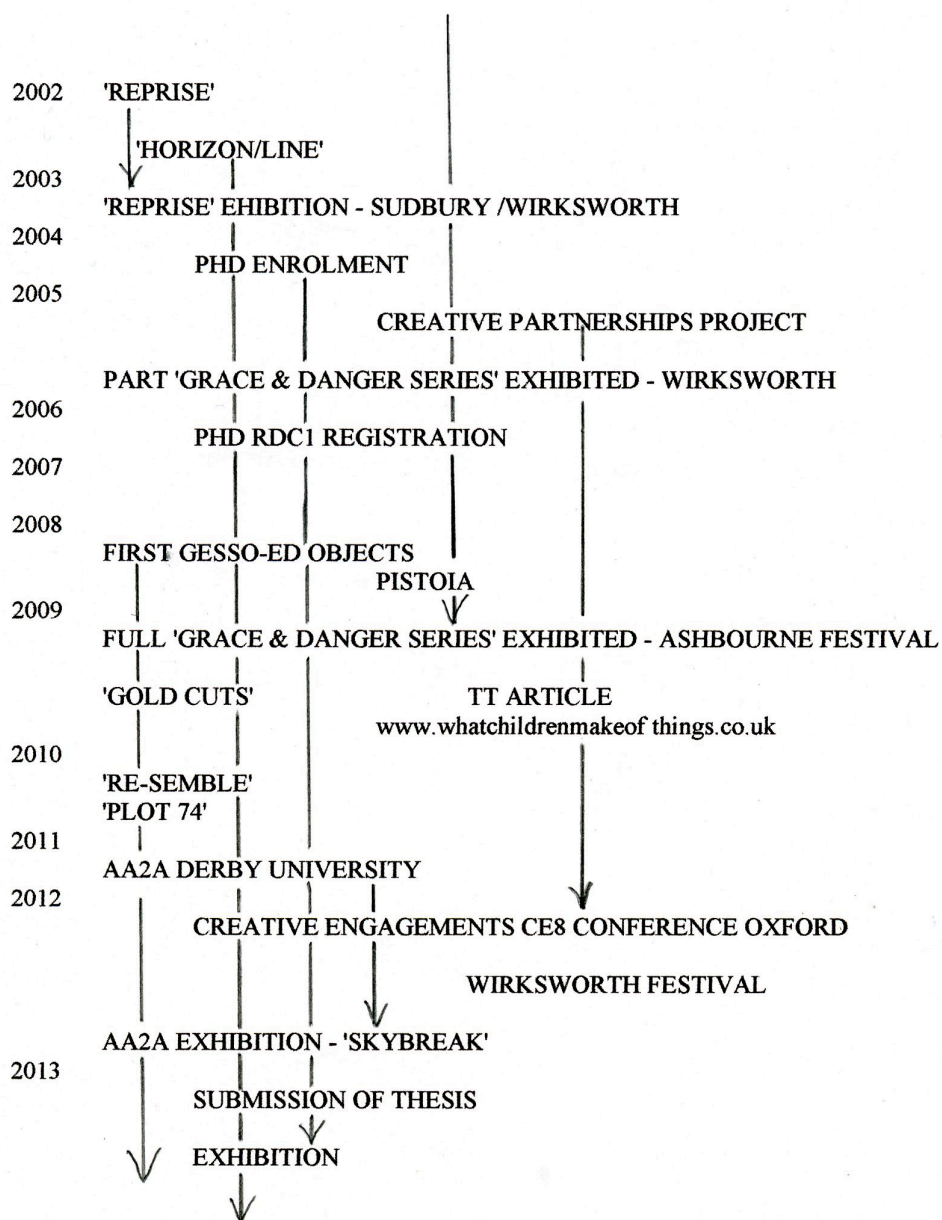
In the Introduction by Stephen Bann to *Systems, Arts Council 1972 - 3*, an exhibition which toured the UK, he writes:

We have therefore traced to the Modern Movement two characteristic views of the relation of 'system' to the work of art, in one case, the painting is itself the system, in the sense that its internal syntax and its status as an object are determined by considerations intrinsic to the painter's craft and the role of the spectator. In the second, widely contrasting case, the system is only adopted as a way of achieving a critical distance from another, transcendently based system. Arp 'constructs' his collages according to chance operations in order to controvert the rationalistic premises with which some of his contemporaries are working. ....Since, unlike the previous example, it is in no way dependent on the specific nature of a particular medium, we can hardly be surprised to see such artists as Samuel Beckett and John Cage contributing to the development of interest in non-transcendental systems, or systems which offer a critique of systems.<sup>i</sup>

These two 'views', or rather I would prefer to say 'approaches' to the way in which a system relates to the making of art works, each play a part in my own practice, and are adhered to with varying degrees of strictness. In the first, a set of 'rules' or principles are established and strictly adhered to, which may be both formal and operational in the way in which the idea is realized: for example in one case a set of rules was established which determined the exact scale and format, the surface or ground, the method (in this case, cutting and folding), the medium, the colour, but not the exact placing of the cuts or folds. It is a means of having an automatic system of production, concentrating the possibility of choice into a very specific area. This 'area of choice', or to put it in Bergsonian terms, this 'zone of indetermination' is limitless, and an essential aspect of it, for myself, is that it has to be a spontaneous choice or act, and is almost invariably a choice and act together,

In the second, the use of chance operations, or the spontaneous selection of objects with which to work, has been combined with a 'system' of 'embellishment' that has been repeated, but in a way that allows for variation. The different series each have their own set of rules, or 'system,' and in this respect they each could be said to provide a critique of the others. In my case, they are all specific to the medium, in that the qualities of the medium are an intrinsic element that determines the nature of the outcome as much as the other elements do. However their starting point, the 'founding intuition' as I shall call it, has come about in different ways, and it is not so clear cut as in the differentiation defined by Bann above. This I explore in depth later in this chapter.

## TIME-LINE OF SERIES & PROJECTS



Time-scale involved in the development of the different series through the period of the research, and the project undertaken with Creative Partnerships, which included the visit to Pistoia (see Appendix). Within this period of time there have also been two site-specific projects that were funded jointly by Derby City Council, the Arts Council and the Cathedral Quarter in Derby, one of which (the first, *Re-Semble*) was in collaboration with a fellow Fine Art and Philosophy PhD student, Chris Wright. The second was a solo installation in a shop window: *Plot 74*. Documentation of *Re-Semble*, *Gold Cuts*, *Skybreak* and the Exhibition is included in the Appendix.

## PROCESS AND EXPERIMENTATION

As I said at the beginning of this Introduction, I saw no point in mimicking the imagery that I observed the children using, as occurred in so many of the examples referred to by Fineberg.<sup>ii</sup> However not only could I make use of the way they went about making things (their 'processes'), I realized on reflection that I had *already* used them. The children saw me working with materials in a downstairs room that I used as a studio, and there was a kind of permeability between us, in which they saw things happening with materials, and I saw what they did and it 'seeped' in. This 'seeping' took a number of different forms, but to describe it as such implies (correctly) that I did not consciously copy any of the things they made. Yet I found myself cutting things up, tearing them, folding them. In one case which was not when they were engaged in making anything, but on the contrary fighting over something, a postcard of a *Pieta* was torn in two (see Figure 55). This destructive act struck me as remarkably apt: at the time of the hunger strikes in Northern Ireland it seemed an ironic comment on the persistence of the vicious cycle of martyrdom.

At the time it was very much made in relation to the crisis in Northern Ireland, but later it became connected to a different idea; one to do with the way in which events impact and break into our lives, events which may be far away from us, but which we feel powerfully. One such event was the release of Nelson Mandela, and two works I had torn, and was waiting to work out what to do with, became reconstructed with the colours of the ANC painted between the torn sections, to fly like ribbons across a dark landscape.

Other paintings were reconstructed with the idea of the rupture being one of time, the earth broken open to reveal a distant time in the past or the future; another place, another time. We were surrounded by a plateau and the gorges cut into it during the melting of the glaciers, by the burial mounds and standing stones of neolithic times, and in the valley the remains of anglo-roman settlements, lynchettes, ridge and furrow.

This process continues in certain series in the sense of its involving an initial making, followed by cutting or tearing of the image, followed by a further process, which may involve the addition of a ground upon which it is then reconstructed with the insertion or addition of colour or additional imagery; or it may involve folding and creasing. At times it has included all these processes. Whilst this was not directly a result of what the children made, it was connected through the tear and the cut to the things they did make, many examples of which have already been given. This was an additional coincidental event,



which brought to my attention the effect that such an action can have on the reading of an image; an instantaneous recognition of an added meaning.



Fra Angelico *Crucifixion with St. Dominic*, Museo San Marco, Firenze. (Fra Angelico 1387-1455)

Figure 57

In a series I write about later in this chapter, in which I reflect upon the development of an idea that came about through immanent intuition, the *Horizon/Line* series, the image that appeared to my mind was that of a line of electric intensity. In its exploration other (transcendent) intuitions gathered which came from external observations that were coincidental, not sought. As the series developed the work became about not only the relation of the line to the ground, but also what the line appeared to be and where: its reference in all cases was that of an edge, or edges, of a meeting point, but also of an opening. The tear became not only a negation, but ironically, a reinforcement of the rift. It could also be seen as a rupture in the surface, in the land.

The edge was the edge of the earth, the edge at which ground or sea becomes sky, or more exactly, space (infinity). In other words what was happening then was in some essential respects, exploring the same fundamental idea. This I can only say in retrospect: I made no

connection between them at the time I started the *Horizon/Line* series. My purpose in this chapter is to examine how this unfolding of connections occurs.

In examining both this 'unfolding of connections' that occurred after I started to work with the 'founding intuition', and the 'readiness' that preceded it, I shall hope to clarify the nature of this 'work' and the conditions that are necessary for the 'founding intuition' to occur in the first place.

## EXPERIMENTATION IN PRACTICE

First of all I shall give an account of the material processes that I experimented with. These were not based on a prior 'founding' intuition, but were based on the principles that I hold in common with those I sought to maintain in what the children did: the principle of spontaneity; the intuitive moment of perception or idea ('what if'); experimentation with materials; repetition and variation. Certain of the experiments I attempted petered out despite objectively being able to see that they could perhaps produce some interesting results eventually, but I felt nothing for them beyond the moment of doing them: I had no compelling urge to continue with them or take them further, and this signified to me that if I was to make work with any authenticity whatsoever, then I could not, at present at least, continue with them. This lack of engagement, or desire to 'stay' with these preliminary experiments, reveals an aspect of process of fundamental importance: one which requires entering into how we choose this rather than that, and why one feels 'right' and another seems 'false'. Heidegger's enquiry into the nature of Being-in the World in relation to Dasein: 'resoluteness', and 'potentiality-for-being' *authentically* is an indication of the complexity of what is uncovered as soon as it is entered into, but that it *is a known* aspect of process in adult practice, one which has to be 'listened' to, and 'paid attention' to, is an important factor to recognise here.

Having decided that it was the four subdivisions of 'appropriation' from the taxonomy I had constructed that particularly interested me, I worked with the following in the order below:

- b) *Assemblage*: objects are transformed into signs by being *collected and placed together*
- c) *Embellished Assemblage*: collection of *and* addition to objects.

I then set out a list of guiding principles for myself:

- \* have no pre-conceived notion of *what* I intend to achieve.  
(I shall need some notions of *how*!)
- \* use materials ready to hand, or/ and objects/ images.
- \* try things out and record photographically, and through drawing.
- \* experiment with methods as well as objects and materials.
- \* plan only what I am to use (it can change, it will change), not what the outcome will be.

I shall describe the experiments below, and illustrate a selection of the results. Certain of these have been developed much further than others for the reasons described above.

Because of the limitations of space within the text of the thesis, a fuller presentation is to be found in the Appendix, as well as in the material included for exhibition.

I began by working on the basis of the following sub-division of the taxonomy of processes:

b) *Assemblage*: objects are transformed into signs by being *collected and placed together*.

Having already a large collection of objects both found and made, (some made by me, some natural forms, others simply found), I started putting them together in a number of different ways which I then photographed. Certain combinations 'did' something: they seemed to communicate something. None of the results were intended, in the sense that there was an intention beforehand to make a meaningful combination. They were the product of a spontaneous decision to 'play' with a group of objects.

These are a selection of images in which the 'components' were assembled in different arrangements. What happens as a consequence of the repetition of these elements is that a kind of drama begins to be implied through the changes in the relations between them, and each element has its own set of associations: for me the figure has a 'Winged Victory' quality, in a state of barely controlled movement; the slate is implacable, monolithic; the skull has the inevitable connotation of death. Changes in scale occur through the different juxtapositions. Perhaps it is inevitable when there is a sequence of related images, but the interpretation of a drama, or an event-like happening, or animation of the objects is starting to happen here, and this as shall be seen, becomes something that is taken up in work that develops later out of this initial period of experimentation.

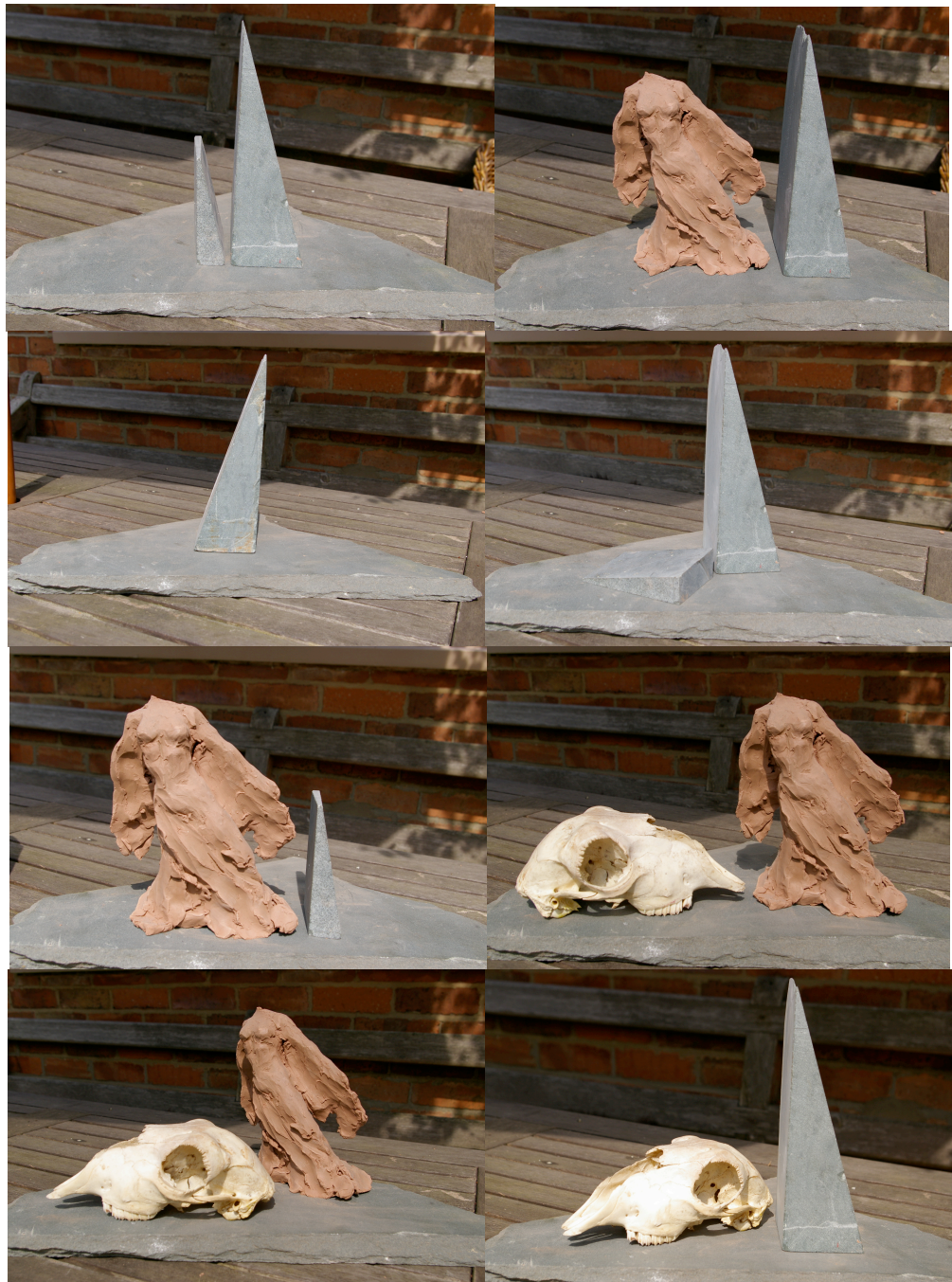


Figure 58. Veronica West *Experimental Tableaux* 2008





Figure 59. Veronica West *Juxtaposition I* 2008 plaster cast & found burnt wood





Figure 60. Veronica West *Juxtaposition II* 2008





Figure 61. Veronica West *Felt form & Burnt Wood* 2008

These are all, as before, objects that I had already collected or made. The burnt wood was from a copse in the valley of Alsop-en-le-Dale that was felled, and all the remaining timber burned in great pyres shortly before I left. It was an event that appeared valedictory. The charred bark has a quality that reminds me of the colour of male blackbirds' feathers, and the forms seem bird-like, or in a much darker interpretation, like charred limbs. The plaster form was cast previously from a trench made in clay, one of a series of three-dimensional 'lines' and casting from impressions into the clay in 2000. The red form was part of an exploration into making both two and three-dimensional forms with felt, and it was always intended to be a form referencing the female body. The 'ground' (the well clipped lawn) I was uncomfortable with at first: now it's comfortable. English suburban connotations seem to provide a surprisingly surreal and perhaps appropriate contrast considering the violent implications of the juxtaposition above.





Figure 62. Veronica West *Parcel* Series 1 2008

I then experimented with the idea of the 'parcel' and folding, based principally on the 'Parcels' given to me by my eldest daughter at the age of three. I made a series of photographs using a piece of felt I had made previously, and fossilised coral. Another version was made using a different type of (much thinner) felt, in the process of being made, and remnants of lead left (coincidentally) by the builders who had been working on my roof.



Figure 63. Veronica West. *Parcel Series 2*. 2009





Figure 64. Veronica West *Parcel Series 2*, 2009

In the experiments that occurred after this (*Embellished Assemblage*) I found myself able to work in a more sustained process, and with the feeling of it being 'right' in the way that I remarked on at the beginning of this section on Experimentation.<sup>2</sup>

As I remarked earlier, one of the unforeseen consequences of the process of photographic documentation is that sequences of folding and cutting as well as transitions between images, have brought in the element of animation, and time-based presentation. The time-based element eventually developed in two ways: one as a kinetic element of the objects that became installed as *Plot 74*; and the other through soft transitions in the slide show presentation *Horizon/line*.

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<sup>2</sup> p.148

c) *Embellished Assemblage*: collection of *and* addition to objects.

As I wrote in Case Study 6 'The Office' one of the most intriguing processes my eldest daughter engaged in was the repetitive coating with Tipex of an old Bakelite telephone, which she had been given to put in her 'office'.<sup>3</sup>



Figure 65. J. 4.6 - 5.4 Telephone & Tipex

The resulting transformation of the object was not simply that the old black Bakelite was changed, but that it acquired a texture and unevenness of surface at odds with its original character: what had been smooth became rough, black was made white. Her father would give her the old bottles that had become too sticky to use, and this became applied systematically and repeatedly to the telephone in a rather ritualistic manner, when she went up to her 'office' to 'work' (usually when her father did). I have already pointed out in Chapter 2, where this example is presented as part of the Case Study *Office*, that at the time I did not make what seems in retrospect a very obvious connection to what J did with the telephone.

I had started working with gesso many years ago, and I make up my own mixture using dental plaster, water and either traditional rabbit skin glue size, or PVA. I had been working on a series of panels, building up layers, and then carving into it, to different depths, and have painted on it in thin washes, built it up retaining the marks of the brush, and drawn on it directly. At the same time I was experimenting with the appropriation of

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<sup>3</sup> Chapter 2, p. 161

objects I decided to see if the gesso would adhere to different types of material than those I usually prepared carefully for it: hardboard carefully sanded to create a 'tooth' for it to adhere to; or plywood.

Amongst the wide range of materials I collected, were a number of pieces of slate gathered from a slate quarry in the Lake District. I selected two pieces to coat with gesso:

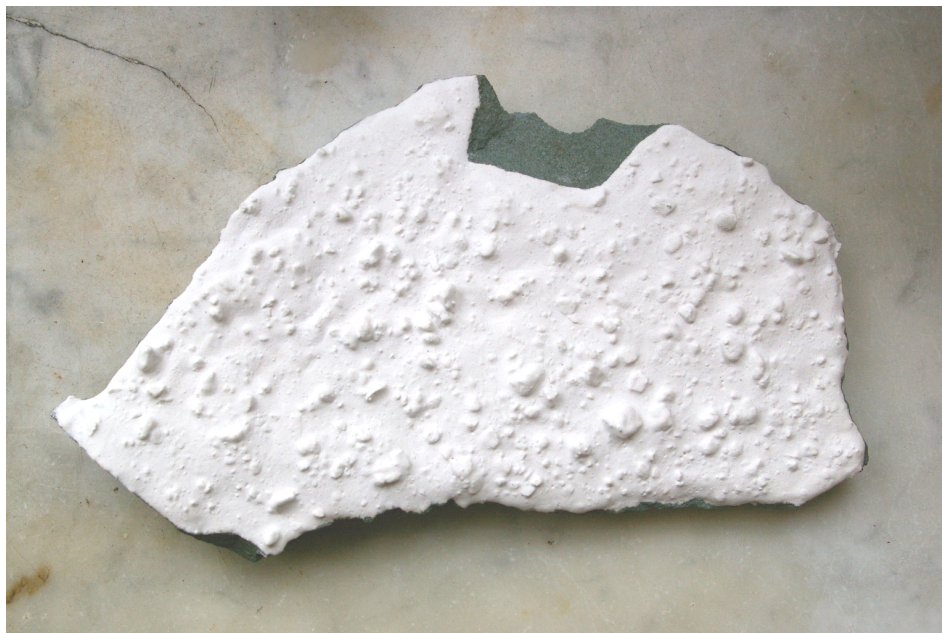


Figure 66. Veronica West *Australia Slate* 2009

I was surprised and very pleased to find how well the gesso adhered to the slate. The texture is a consequence of the plaster having become a little damp in the bag, and when mixed retained these harder lumps which I could have crushed, or sieved out, or sanded down after it was dry, but I liked the texture. The nature and qualities of texture I have known for some time, to be a very important element in the work I make, whatever the medium or materials. In paint, the surface qualities of the mark, its impasto relief upon a surface, or its melting away into the wet paper, and the qualities of edges whether in relief, hard or soft: all these are means by which different associations and spatial situations can be constructed. In intaglio printmaking it is the depth and quality of emboss, and the granular texture of aquatint, or the effects of carborundum and sugar-lift, that excite me as ways of working and in the work of others (Goya, Tapies). Tapies' work has always affected me, for many reasons, one of the most important being its surface qualities and texture as well as the trace, the remains of presence. But a presence that because so very tactile is felt, even if not literally by touch, by feeling it through the sight of it, inscribed into marble dust or *orujo*, the residue of pressed grapes. There is a small sculpture by Picasso, which he made as far as I know, three versions of, entitled *Glass of Absinthe*, one

of which has the texture of sugar granules over its entire surface, its form constructed from the shapes seen in the reflections in the glass, the glass stem, and the traditional spoon with a cube of sugar balanced on the top. He has taken the texture of the sugar and distributed it throughout. There is only one version like this. I find it hard to explain why this should be the one that I find particularly fascinating, except perhaps that it is a kind of joke in the way one aspect of a thing is applied to all of it, just as in certain jokes an application of a certain logic is extended beyond its normal domain: the granular texture of the sugar cube is applied to the whole, despite the opposing character of the surface of glass.

Each of the gesso pieces, whatever surface they are on, have their own texture: it varies according to the mix, the way it has been applied, the number of layers, the consistency and state of the plaster itself prior to *mixing*. The decision over 'where to draw the line' in terms of the edge became something that I allowed to happen spontaneously. Why there was a need for there to be an edge, or boundary, I did not consider at first: I found myself stopping at a certain point, 'instinctively'. I realised later that it was in part in order to reveal the nature of what was covered, a visual *before* and *after*: but also the *edge* had a direct connection with the *Horizon/Line Series*.<sup>4</sup> Meeting with my supervisors in my studio, who found this coating of objects particularly interesting, we speculated on collecting, or amassing objects to be 'gesso-ed': on what they might be and from where; and how to show the nature of *process* rather than finished works, this being the main subject of enquiry. The 'source' became my allotment.



Slate 2, 2008

Studio 2008

Figure 67

<sup>4</sup> These connections, like so many that have occurred throughout my practice, are only realised *in* or *after* the making, and it is through the *recognition* of a possible idea, through *interpretation*, that they are brought into consciousness: it is in this sense that artists will describe working with materials as a form of drawing, in the sense of 'drawing out'.



## *PLOT 74*

The allotment (plot 74) close to my home in Derby has an imposing greenhouse, built evidently by a man who came over from Serbia in 1948. He had come over to Derby as a result of the internecine warfare that occurred there after the war. This greenhouse, and also a shed, as well as the undergrowth around the plot, contained objects that must have belonged to him: shoes, and many different types of ironware - brackets, hinges, handles, bolts, lamps, as well as his cap, boots, a large quantity of small whisky bottles, and a rolled umbrella. Newspapers and plastic sheeting was tucked into the eaves, and all of these I explored and documented photographically, as well as through the process I then began to experiment with. I also filmed both the gathering and coating (with gesso) of objects from there. It was what followed from the experimentation with these collected objects that resulted in the second site-specific project for the Derby 'Art in the City' initiative in 2010 - 2011.

The photographs that follow show some of the experimentation that was going on in the studio, and the film in the Appendix (6) shows not simply the documentation of part of the process, but also something of the oddness of it; using a static camera but from an odd viewpoint, or using a hand-held camera and thus producing somewhat erratic movement, to record the collecting of material.<sup>5</sup>

There were a particularly large number of hinges, handles and brackets that were hung up in the various interstices of the greenhouse, and this suspension of the objects led to my re-hanging them in the studio on a series of rusted picture hooks that had an affinity with the rusted objects I hung on them. Partly to remove them off the floor, and to see what would happen, I then started to hang other things on them: or placed them, balanced precariously (the umbrella) or hooked over (the wire). There were a lot of different kinds of wire and mesh there, and these (also rusted) I balanced or hung on the brackets or other objects also. After I had experimented with a number of different combinations, I also started to work with a variety of different flat surfaces some of which I had already coated with gesso, and others I added the gesso to. One of these was a heavy thick section of glass, removed from the roof, a Victorian skylight that I left in the state I had found it apart from the addition of a line of gesso, which adhered surprisingly well. These were then stacked up against the wall upon which the other objects were hanging.

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<sup>5</sup> Item 7 in Appendix





Figure 68. Veronica West *Plot 74'* 2009 - work in progress in studio

One of the surprising things that occurred simply through the placing of these objects together in the space, was that amongst them was one of the *horizon/line* paintings, at an early stage, on gesso, turned on its side to become a vertical (see illustration on previous page, bottom right, where it can be seen leaning against the wall).<sup>6</sup> The photograph does not show the intensity of the colour of the yellow strip, which when placed there, as the viewer's eye roams around the different objects, produces a vivid after-image, which is then 'projected' onto the 'empty' white areas of the other gesso panels, and wherever the eye moves. This promises possibilities in the setting up of the space in which the work will be viewed. The after-image is, and has for many years been one of the visual elements I have worked with, and is a key component of the *horizon/line* series. I had wanted to introduce some kind of linear element into these gesso pieces, but thought more of it as drawn (on the wall), but this ephemeral phenomenon that moves with the eye is a much more apt and fundamental link between the series.

Oct.21st - early this morning.....I realized that *illusion* is a crucial part of what I want to work with (& have always worked with) - ambiguous figures & the effect of the after-image as a phenomenon that transforms colour *and happens in the eye of the viewer in the present* - and the creation of an illusion of depth, or a contradictory illusion of depth and flatness combined - the virtual - play on perceptual readings, all needs to enter into the development of the work (2009)

After some time I noticed that when I moved the pieces around (those on the wall, that had wire elements as part of them), they would continue to move for a while after I had placed them. Each piece of wire moved differently: some had a regular pendulum beat, whilst others had a rather erratic, crazy movement. Some trembled. *It caught my attention*. It was because of this movement that I started to think of activating them. What began as an accidental part of handling them and moving them about became fascinating, partly because of the differences in movement, but it also seemed to accentuate the rather humorous and odd juxtapositions which made the objects appear animated through I suppose, the curious relationships they had with one another.

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<sup>6</sup> See discussion in next section on *horizon/line* series on this vertical orientation and its connotations with the work of Barnett Newman. This uncomfortable association I reflect on, but it could in this context, this after-image moving around the space, also provides a metaphor for the way in which iconic forms in the culture 'haunt' the artist, and the viewer.

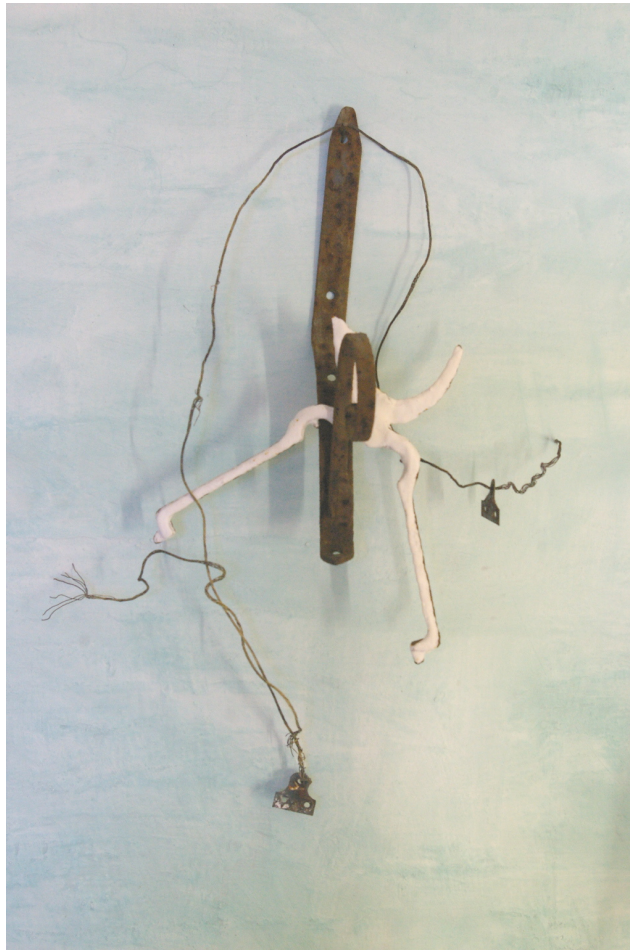


Figure 69. Veronica West *Plot 74*, (detail) 2009

There was no logic apart from what could be hung or balanced on the first object to be 'situated', although aesthetic considerations entered into it: the way the wire curved, the contrast, the way the shapes related, the space they contained. The wire, together with the objects, in their contrast with the ground, had the qualities of a drawing. I had applied for funding to create an installation in one of the empty shops in Derby, on the historic street known as Sadlergate in the Cathedral Quarter. This was successful, and it was installed over Christmas and New Year 2011-12.

I had to find a way to create a surface against which they would work, and covered sheets of plasterboard with gesso, which were then stained to re-create the distemper surface of my studio with which the objects seemed to have an affinity. It is curious this 'affinity': it is these intuitions that are so hard to fathom, like why it is that the surface of gesso is 'satisfying'. It can also be very varied: it can be drawn on, painted, carved into, built up, sanded down, be rough, be smooth. The colour of the distemper on the wall is a turquoise, which varies in saturation, and is a pale version of the colour of the



greenhouse. I was able to make a wash, which had similar qualities on the gesso. I then had to work out the means of activating the wire, and devised a method using electric motors that could be controlled by timers.

When I was photographing the installation one evening, I met a woman from a local church who was walking around the area to find anyone who was homeless, so that she could help them. We fell into conversation, and she commented on what she felt when she first saw it, a day or so before. She said it had a 'ghostly presence': that it conjured the presence of the man whose belongings these once were (I had written a brief statement about the man who built the greenhouse, which was exhibited with the work).

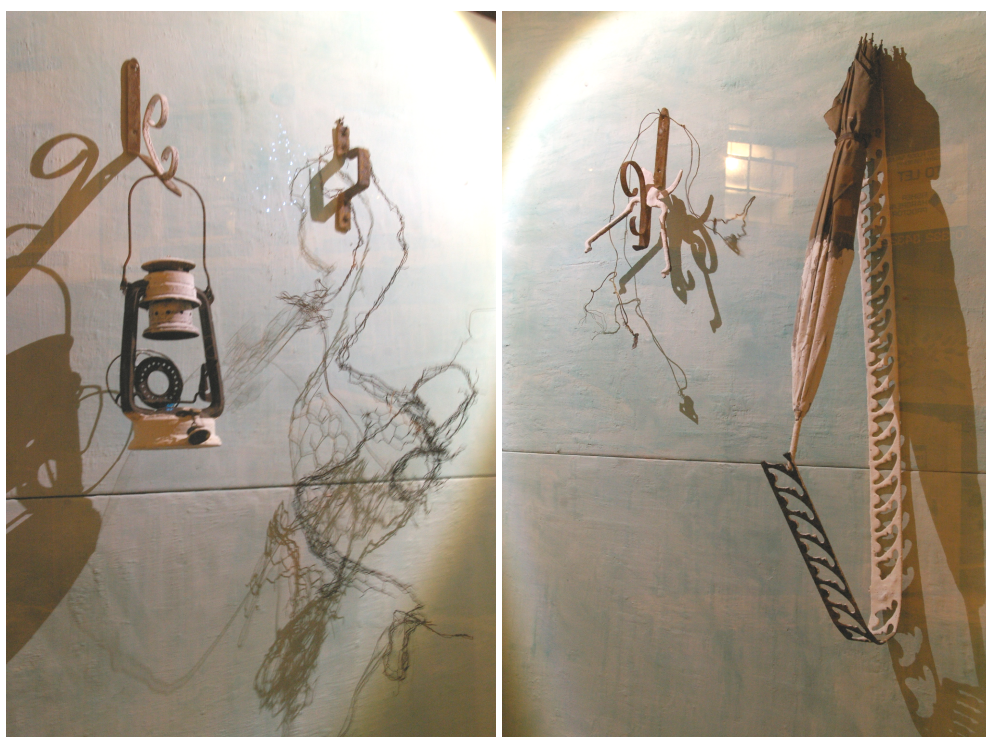


Figure 70. V. West Installation of *Plot 74* in shop window, Sadlergate, Derby 2010 - 11

## *Forms of Intuition*

It is most important at this point to emphasize one very significant aspect of the series I reflect on next, which is that the 'founding intuition' is one that occurs spontaneously *without being sought*. Another significant fact is that there are two types of such founding intuition. The first occurs in "the authentic moment of the perceivedness of the perceived in that *in perception the perceived entity is bodily there*." thus could be said to be found as well as founding, whilst walking, or being out in the world.<sup>iii</sup> This passage from Heidegger is of great importance to the nature of what is contained in such a moment, and what we make (or do not make) of it:

What constitutes the feature of *simplicity* in perception? Clarification of this element of simplicity will also lead to the clarification of the sense of the founding and being founded of categorial acts. With the clarification of the founded act, we are concurrently placed in the position of understanding the objectivity both of simple perception and of founded acts as a unified objectivity. It permits us to see how even simple perception, which is usually called sense perception, is already intrinsically pervaded by categorial intuition.<sup>iv</sup>

Even the most 'commonplace', 'everyday' type of perception, Heidegger is saying, is 'intrinsically pervaded by categorial intuition'. 'Simple perception' in other words, is by no means simple, for it links to all the connections, and domains that operate in the structure of intuition that is categorial.

The second type of intuition is 'immanent', in that it occurs in the mind. These are also not sought, they 'happen': they occur in such a way that they seem to be chanced upon spontaneously, that is, without consciously thinking them up. When they are sought, they rarely, if ever, occur, although (and this is most important) it is necessary for there to be a *readiness*.

However they not only 'happen': in the examples that I reflect on, they are 'attended to'. My attention was caught by them. How does it happen and why should it be that my attention was so caught? In the first chapter, I examined to a limited degree, the nature of *attention* as Husserl conceived it, and pointed out that *attention* in this Husserlian sense, is different from Luquet's notion of *predilection*, the latter being that which the child pays attention to *more* than all the other things that are around them, or which in particular *captures* their attention, and captures it repeatedly. It is within this area of *attention* however, that the possibility for different kinds of '*intensive*

modifications' can occur. Seeing something *as* something signifies a movement into the 'horizon' of the object, in which other interpretations, or noemas are situated.

Furthermore, as Ricoeur points out:

What is important to emphasize is that it is not possible to implement the structure of the "as" without also implementing the structure of anticipation. The notion of "meaning" obeys this double condition of the *Als* and the *Vor-*: "Meaning, which is structured by fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception, forms for any project the horizon in terms of which something can be understood as something" (SZ 151; BT 193). Thus the field of interpretation is as vast as that of understanding, which covers all projection of meaning in a situation. <sup>v</sup>

This 'readiness' which relates directly to the 'fore-structures' alluded to by Ricoeur, and to Heidegger's concept of 'circumspection' will be examined more closely in Chapter 4, but it is important to describe in this context the way in which 'readiness' is prepared. One of the ways is through the development of certain kinds of activity in which it is possible to encounter things, or perceptions in which intuitions can occur.

Going out and walking or being active in a place on a regular basis, is one of the conditions necessary for these 'occurrences', like going to the studio on a daily basis, and engaging in often repetitive and automatic processes is another.

In reading Hannah Arendt's essay on Walter Benjamin, in *Men in Dark Times*, the following passage alludes to the way in which 'readiness' can be 'set up' so to speak: '...what profoundly fascinated Benjamin from the beginning was never an idea, it was always a phenomenon. "What seems paradoxical about everything that is justly called beautiful is the fact that it appears"(Schriften I, 349), and this paradox - or more simply, the wonder of appearance - was always at the centre of all his concerns'. Arendt inserts a footnote here alluding to Baudelaire's 'classical description of the *flaneur* in his essay 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne': 'It is to him, aimlessly strolling through the crowds in the big cities in studied contrast to their hurried, purposeful activity, that things reveal themselves in their secret meaning'....<sup>vi</sup>

Underlying my process of experimentation, and after having made notes on a passage from Lingis' Introduction to Levinas' *Existence & Existents* on 'the instant' and its potential for beginning anew, I want to include here the notes I made on Lingis' Introduction:

Time is the inner structure of subjectivity, that is, of the movement of existing. Levinas' work contains not only wholly new analyses of the form of time - of the present, the past, the future - but also a new conception of the *work* of time.....the form of the present *not* a pure punctual line of separation between an infinite extension of past and of future, *nor* a Heideggerean "field of presence" but "*a pulse of existence that disconnects from the transmission of the past, closes in upon itself, and finds itself irrevocably and definitively held in all the absolute weight of its being..... Bearing all the absolute weight of being, the instant is held in itself, and does not, of its own force, conjure up a future.*"<sup>vii</sup> (my emphasis)

For Levinas our temporal experience of the present does not hold only apprehension, threat or the imminence of nothingness, but also *hope, the expectation of something else*. For Levinas - *the lure of the future is essentially the lure of pardon*. The instant becomes *a commencement, an inauguration, a dawning*, and because the present at which consciousness is, is for it an instant, an awakening, an 'Augenblick', consciousness could be origin, beginning, zero point.....*a chance to recommence otherwise.* (my emphasis)<sup>viii</sup>

It struck me forcibly because of its direct relation to the spontaneous being in the moment that lies at the heart of my enquiry. Thinking about the moments (called little 'epiphanies' by James Joyce, they are perhaps little 'redemptions'?) when you are held, the instant holds you, stops you in your tracks, with a sudden realisation which may relate to the future, the present, the past or all three.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> I referred in my notes here, to W.B.Yeats' poem 'Vacillation'.



### *Intuition I (Transcendent): 'Grace and Danger' Series*

In this first example, I was 'stopped in my tracks' whilst walking over Hungerford Bridge, which crosses the Thames between Embankment and the South Bank. (It has now changed drastically, having been developed into its present form as a millennium architectural feature). At that time I was walking down the steep steps to Embankment when I saw a piece of plastic caught on the spikes of the railings, billowing out in the wind, transparent, catching the light. It instantly held my attention, and I wanted to record it in some way and pulled out a little notebook from my pocket to make a quick drawing of it: a notation, spare, rapid, a few marks, in a way very abstract, to mark this moment that held me on my way across London.

It is most important to try and describe the characteristics of the experience of that moment of seeing, how it felt in the mind and body when the attention was caught. The perception was 'striking'. What do I mean by this? Is the correct term 'striking' or 'felt', and is that a question of intensity, or strength of feeling, or a difference? Both refer to a bodily sensation, like that of touch, thus the term 'felt', or to be 'struck', 'held', 'stopped', so much so that the body is literally stopped, and immobilised if it is allowed to be, and held there with the perception, the moment extended.

*There is a feeling of a command almost, or a demand, for attention to be kept.* This stopping occurs in reading, in writing, and in listening too, as well as in looking. A moment will suddenly catch the attention, and require you to stay, or to return and 'go over it again', and perhaps again and again. Of all the countless sights around us, or words on a page, or passages of music, that 'moment' catches our attention, a sight more than an object, a whole rather than a part, and it connects with us. This connection feels deep and it feels physical.

Similar physical sensations attend the experience of seeing or hearing or reading something that we may describe as 'perplexing', 'incomprehensible', or 'shocking', but the type of perception or intuition I wish to describe is one which does not stimulate a feeling of fear or shock, neither is it incomprehensible in the sense that it cannot be 'worked out', because it is recognized instantly even though its significance is not always realised at the time. Nor is it a purely aesthetic experience (if such things are possible) in the sense that there is an appreciation of form or colour for its own sake, although it may be *through* its aesthetic qualities that the attention is caught. These things that I describe could be seen as 'beautiful'

or 'ugly', depending on the viewer, and certainly not considered as having any obvious 'value': a bit of rubbish, cracked cement, a thin yet brilliant light on the edge of the horizon of the sea.



Figure 71. VW notebook

Where is this 'feeling', and what do I mean by 'striking' in terms of a bodily sensation, for nothing has literally touched or struck me? Yet there is an inner sensation. When this occurs, to and in the body, whereabouts in the body is it felt? For me it is often accompanied by an intake of breath, and it is felt in the chest or in the lungs or the stomach, in the heart perhaps, and sometimes with a quickening of pulse. It can be described as a kind of excitement, an ache, a thrill, a fullness, a sharpness, a piercing, a pang. It cannot be made to happen. It is like seeing a loved one. Yet if it is anticipated, it does not happen, and so in this respect it is not like seeing a loved one. When it occurs at times when it is least expected, it is often most powerful of all.

In note §92 Husserl examines the noetic and noematic aspects of attentional changes, and posits the existence of 'noetic strata' ('rememberings within rememberings') when for example:

Within the given total field of potential noeses and correlative objects of noeses we sometimes look at a whole, the tree, perhaps, which is perceptually present, sometimes at these or those parts, and *moments* (my italics) of it; then again we look at a nearby physical thing or at a complex content and process. Suddenly we turn our regard to an object of memory, which 'comes to mind'. Instead of going through the perceptual noesis, which in a continuously unitary though highly articulated manner, constitutes for us the continually appearing world of physical things, the regard goes through a remembering noesis into a world of memory, passes over into memories of other degrees or into worlds of fantasy, and so forth.<sup>ix</sup>

Later in §92 he speaks of the pure ego's 'mental regard', or the 'ray of its regard', or 'attentional ray', which picks up certain of the varied 'noematic moments' which constitute the noematic content, but of which many remain unattended to, or are in 'non-actionality mode'. It seems awkward, and almost clumsy to speak of the 'pure ego' and this kind of spotlight which is directed by it, but it bears close comparison with Luquet's notion of the 'ecran colore', the screen which allows only certain 'wavelengths' to pass through: they are similar metaphors to describe a selective intuition.

He then goes on:

Obviously the modifications in the noema are not of such a kind that mere outward adjuncts are added to something which remains unvaryingly identical; on the contrary, the concrete noemas change through and through, it being a question of necessary modes belonging to the mode in which it is given.

This is of particular importance in that it supports the idea that the form (the plastic bag for example) can be seen as significant, beautiful, poignant as well as dirty, rubbish, depressing, and also that when the mode of attention changes it is possible to 'see' things which it was not possible to 'see' before.<sup>8</sup>

However as Husserl acknowledges in the following passage, the difficulty in separating noesis from noema becomes evident:

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<sup>8</sup> A very good example is when teaching students about colour, who have never 'seen' the after-image phenomenon, or realised how it affects their perception of colour, are astonished when they begin to see it for the first time. The same thing can occur in the study of tonal values when making an observational study. Also in drawing the figure, whilst the figure may remain in the same pose, the attention may be brought to the structure, or the tonal values, or its relation to the environment, and the 'noemas' will change 'through and through'.

Yet on closer inspection, it is not the case that the *entire* noematic content (the *attentional core*, so to speak) characterized by this or that mode can be kept constant in contrast to any attentional modifications whatever. On the contrary, looked at from the noetic side it becomes apparent that certain noeses, either necessarily or with respect to their determined possibility, are conditioned by modes of attention and in particular, by positive attention in the distinctive sense <of this word>. All "effecting of acts", the "actional taking of positions", the "effecting" of a subject-positing and a predicative positing thereupon, the making (*Vollzug*) of a valuation or of a valuation for the sake of something else, the making of a choice and so forth - all these presuppose positive attention to that towards which the Ego takes a position. But this in no way alters the fact that this functioning of the regard, which moves about and broadens or narrows its span, signifies a *dimension sui generis of correlative, noetic and noematic*, modifications, the systematic enquiry into the essence of which is among the fundamental tasks of general phenomenology.<sup>x</sup>

Husserl goes on to describe this 'functioning of the regard' as the 'Ego-ray' and the 'actionality-mode' as the '*characteristic of subjectiveness*'. "The 'Object' is struck; it is the target; it is put into a relation to the Ego (and by the Ego itself) but is not 'subjective'." However, in this case the Ego was 'struck' by the Object: it was not a conscious aimed movement of the regard, but on the contrary was at the periphery, and 'caught' the regard unawares.

How long it has taken to unravel the mystery of what held me, and what it was I recognised, (because it was a recognition beyond the fact, beyond the identification of the substance, the materiality of the thing) is one of the things that fascinates me. That as well as the sight, there is the content of the sight; as well as the strangeness of the sight, there is also the knowledge that it holds, the knowledge that is as yet unknown but which makes its presence felt. This presence is felt physically at the time, it is undeniable, unforced, unsought, and whilst its significance is recognised, what it signifies is not. How can this happen? *How can we know that a thing is significant yet not know what it signifies?* Only after it has been worked on, a process which may take days, or months or even years, there will perhaps come a point when it is possible to say, 'ah, now I think I see what it is'. Only through the process of making images based upon it, repetitions of it, drawing it over again, putting other elements from other drawings made in the same way from things seen in the same way has a meaning emerged which seems to show me what it was that stopped me on Hungerford Bridge.

Yet how do I know, how can I be certain that this emerging meaning is what lay embedded in the original perception? *How do I know that it is not simply meaning added during the process, rather than meaning uncovered?* My supervisor Dr. Johanna Hällsten, in discussion about this put the question "Does it matter?" "Expand what you mean by

'signified' here. Can it 'simply' not signify an opening up or slippage and 'bringing to attention, to bring us outside of the gate to look and feel? Why do we need to find a 'signifier', a need to know?" My response was the following: *It's a good question. I think it's because I have discovered through working in this way, something about that time, not just something of interest, but something fundamental; a sense of something which becomes evident only through the process of making: the realisation of 'a state of affairs'.*

I made the choice to work with it, and develop it through scaling it up, working with charcoal and acrylic on canvas, and retaining as much as possible the immediacy of the direct line in the drawing. I was already working in this way on paper on a large scale, from drawings made in a similar way whilst walking out in the landscape. They were indicators rather than representations; shorthand notes of fundamental visual facts; minimal and incomplete. One of the drawings I had made whilst walking is illustrated overleaf. In a similar way to the first intuition, I had seen something whilst out walking in the Derbyshire landscape: black marks made in bitumen in a concrete lined dewpond, its bowl shape cupped in the grass.

When I transcribed the drawing onto the canvas initially, the format was 'landscape' and was in fact large with the width double the height (4' high x 8' wide). It was drawn initially with charcoal onto raw cotton duck canvas. For reasons of space it was placed aside, on its end, in other words with the width now becoming the height. In this position, after a gap of time, on seeing it again before proceeding further, I was 'struck' by the way it appeared. I stopped, and looked again. I found its appearance in this orientation very different, intriguing and ambiguous, suspended from the top of the canvas like a rope with repeated long curved lines hanging from it. It had become a very different form, now separated from its source. I liked it but it felt uncomfortable, and yet I liked this uncomfortable quality: awkwardly suspended and implicitly in motion, hanging there.

Later I began to see parallels between these two forms, the billowing plastic and the suspended lines, both suspended, caught. After all was I not in a form of suspension? Having moved from the farmhouse in the small hamlet in Derbyshire where I had lived for over twenty years, still adjusting to living in a town house in Derby, I was still working on these paintings of which there were now two pairs, with another two canvasses having been stretched, waiting to be worked on. The scrap of plastic on Hungerford Bridge was seen at a time when I was experiencing major changes in my life, about to leave a place I had lived in for most of my adult life, my daughters now grown and gone. It seems obvious looking back on it, that I should become so acutely aware of something abandoned there, in that part of London where the young homeless sit regularly begging on the steps on either side of the bridge, the Thames below with its tides and traffic, the city a place of

transition and the railway line and passing trains a continual reminder of journeys being taken with the regularity and remorselessness of modern life.

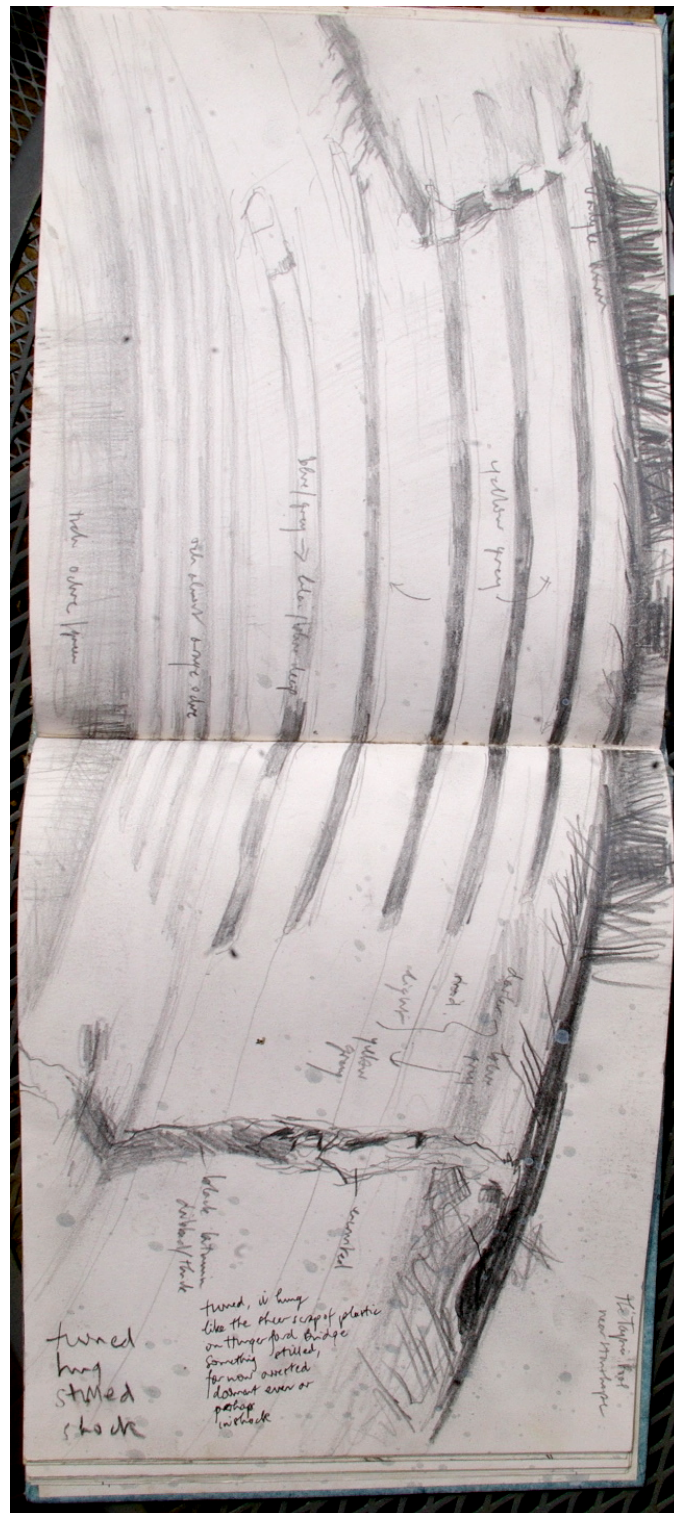


Figure 72. *VW* notes on dewpond





above: *Grace & Danger* Series, Wirksworth Festival 2005  
below: detail *Stanshope 1* 2005.charcoal, acrylic & mud on canvas

Figure 73



## *Intuition II (Immanent): 'Horizon/Line' Series*

This series, as can be seen from the 'Time-Line' above, was begun before starting on my doctoral studies, and has continued throughout it. It is entirely by coincidence that one of the key terms in Phenomenology is 'horizon': I had read neither Husserl, nor Levinas, before beginning this enquiry, or this series of works. My point is that the series cannot be viewed as illustrative of theory, or developed consciously as a consequence of it. However, it is nevertheless apt, and relevant to cite once more the passage by Levinas on Husserl's concept:

The concept of consciousness includes more than the central sphere of awakened and active consciousness. Husserl is far from ignoring that - as had been perceived by Bergson and James - each moment of consciousness is surrounded by a halo, by fringes, or, in Husserl's terms, by *horizons*, which are, so to speak, in the margin of the central phenomenon: "Each perception is an *ex-ception*(*jedes Erfassen ist ein Herausfassen*)" (*Ideen.*,§35, p.62) Cogitation makes the *cogitatum* its own by extracting it from a background which constantly accompanies it and which may become itself the object of an *Herausfassung*,(Ibid.,§113, pp.230-31) In the latter case, what was originally kept in sight falls into the background without totally disappearing from the field of consciousness. In a new *cogito*, "the preceding *cogito* ceases to shine, falls in the darkness, but is still kept alive, although in a different manner".(Ibid., § 115, p.236) <sup>xi</sup>

The series started after a visit to a hypnotist to whom I had been referred during my post-operative care after a major operation. After the second session she asked me if I had made any drawings or images about the experience as she knew about the nature of my work, and on finding I had not, asked me to make some and bring them along next time. The image that came to mind in that instant was very simple. It was an image about a sensation. I wanted the image to create the sensation that I experienced at the site of the scar, intense and half burning, half itching; a kind of sensation rather like pain but not painful; a sensation it was impossible to define and one I had never experienced before.

The surgical incision was horizontal and the image that appeared in my mind was a single horizontal line in a colour 'field' or 'ground'. This would have an electric intensity to it. It was not only the post-operative sensation it was the idea of the cut itself as well as the fact of it; not only the uncompromising coldness of the surgeon's act, but also its clean precision and its necessity. I wanted the line to react to the ground in a burning kind of way such that it would not remain 'in', but rather it would be both 'in' and 'out' of the ground, oscillate and reverberate and create lines of light in and around it. I knew immediately that

in order to produce such an effect I needed to use the after-image, a phenomenon I have used in virtually all the work I have made using colour.

The after-image multiplies in intensity the longer the gaze is held upon the external source that has stimulated it, and depends upon an external source for its stimulation. But why it occurs and where it occurs, whether in the brain, as a result of the activity of the brain, or whether in the structure of the retina itself, in the cones which are the colour receptors, (the so-called 'opponent-process theory' of Hering, Young & Helmholtz, and more recently Hurvich & Jameson) or whether in the eyes' ability to see the relative values in a visual field and perceive them accordingly (Land), it is still not clear. Varela (*The Embodied Mind*, 1993) appears to accept the 'opponent-process' theory.

Land's experiments on the perception of colour, and in particular on colour *constancy*, which continued from 1950 - 1980, have provided a possible explanation confirmed by later experiments: that our perception of colour depends upon the relative light values in the visual field, and *not* upon a fixed property of the object (i.e. the reflected wavelength of each object). Instead of the notion of a property being held by each object *individually* in the visual field, Land discovered that our perception of colour depends upon the *relative values in the entire visual field*. In other words, the perception of colour is not only dependent upon the properties of the object but is equally dependent upon the properties of our perception.

Yet despite this being an ever-present component of our perception, we are ignorant of it, unaware of it as a phenomenon, until it is pointed out, and demonstrated, and for some people, of all ages, this is a revelation. So this indicates that this phenomenon is one that is dependent not only on the structure of the eye and nervous system, as well as on the composition of the visual field, but also *if it is to be perceived consciously*, on the *nature of the attention and the knowledge that is brought to it*.

I made a series of experiments with this in watercolour, some small, some the full dimensions of the watercolour paper, with the horizontal line drawn over the top in soft pastel. I made about a dozen of these initial experiments. Months later I became mesmerized during a channel crossing over to France, by the edge of the horizon, and how it changed along its length from dark to light, from soft to sharp, now light against dark, now dark against light, from one colour to another. I made drawings on the boat, some in pencil, some in colour, and some whilst waiting for the boat to leave Ouistreham on my return, incorporating a succession of horizontal strips, which included observations of the colours on the shore. It may seem odd, but at the time I made no connection whatsoever between these and the previous series of the line in the coloured ground.

Later whilst in France visiting the coast at St. Pair, below Granville, I was caught again, struck by the sight of a brilliant light on the far horizon of the sea, an electric edge often just at the point where the sea met the sky, sometimes below it, often directly below the position of the sun or sometimes elsewhere depending on the position of the cloud; a brilliant luminescent edge or thin line of light, unimaginably bright and virtually impossible to find an equivalent for. This continued over a number of days in which I returned repeatedly to observe it and experiment with ways of recording it. The process of doing this, and comparing what happened when I took photographs of it, as well as making drawings, revealed something very vividly, that I have known about ever since I started really working with colour, and is a fact which affects our visual perception all the time even though we are not usually aware of it.

When looking at a situation of this kind, where there is a particular intensity of light, and when looking at an edge (this happens with any edge where there is a strong contrast) the darker edge produces a bright after-image that adds to the brightness on the bright side of the edge, making it more intense, and variable (rather like a strobe). This type of after-image is also known as *simultaneous contrast*. In situations where colours lie next to one another, an exact replica of the form of what is seen (a line for example) will appear as a brightly coloured light of the opposite (*complementary*) colour. A red will produce a green light, and vice versa; a violet will produce a yellow. Furthermore the exact composition of the colour will be reflected in its after-image: a greenish blue or turquoise will produce an orange. The colours intensify during the process of looking, and mix optically with the surrounding ground, which then produces the opposite after-image, which then mixes with the original, and intensifies it further. This will continue throughout the duration of attention.

It was this type of experience that the American and English colour field painters of the 1950s and 60s were exploring in the knowledge of all the work done already by Albers and Itten. When Fried wrote about a new kind of illusionism, it was part of the 'vocabulary' or 'repertoire' so to speak:

the new illusionism both subsumes and dissolves the picture-surface....while simultaneously preserving its integrity. More accurately, it is the *flatness* of the picture-surface, and not that surface itself, that is dissolved, or anyway *neutralized*, by the illusion in question. The literalness of the picture-surface is not denied; but one's experience of that literalness is an experience of the properties of different pigments, of foreign substances applied to the surface of the painting, of the weave of the canvas, above all of colour - but not, or not in particular, of the flatness of the support. Not that literalness here is experienced as competing in any way with the illusionistic presence of the painting as a whole; on the contrary, one somehow *constitutes* the other. And in fact there is no distinction one can make between attending to the

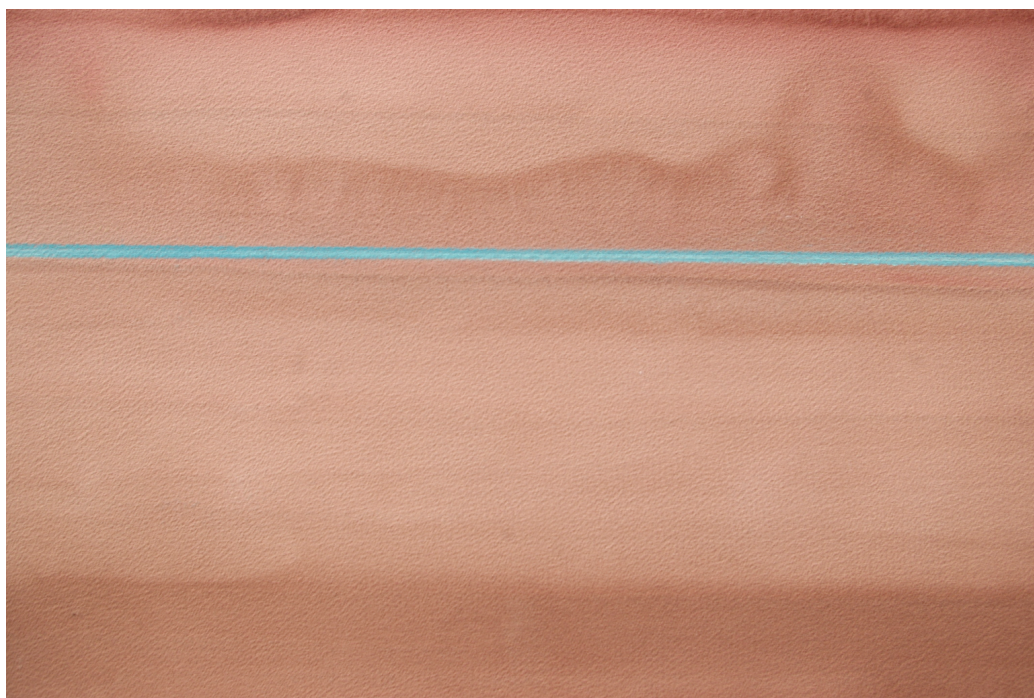
surface of the painting and to the illusion it generates: to be gripped by one is to be held, and moved, by the other.<sup>xii</sup>



Veronica West *Horizon Series*, 2004 (above), 2006 (below): pastel on watercolour

Figure 74





Veronica West *Horizon Series*, 2009 (above), 2010 (below): pastel on watercolour  
Figure 75





VW *Horizon Series St, Pair* 2008 (above) *St. Pair* 2007 (below) pastel on Canson paper

Figure 76



This strikes me as similar to the way in which Heidegger distinguishes the ontology of the work of art by its material not being 'used up' in the purpose for which it is being used, as in a functional object, except that in this case it is a distinction which characterizes particular types of 20th Century and contemporary practice which embody this awareness or in some way comment upon it. I mean here that the material is not 'used up' in the creation of an illusion or a representation but is seen *as* that material *and as* that to which it refers at the same time (as in the case of *exemplification*).<sup>9</sup>

The reading of the images is very much controlled by the colour. Of those in which there is a single line or single band of lines, one set is dominated by lemon yellow, yellow ochre, burnt umber, raw sienna and Indian red; another by blues, blue-greens, greens and greys. The first set inevitably conjures associations of land, whilst the second almost inevitably triggers associations with sea. A third set has begun recently after having caught sight of an embedded fine seam of iron pyrites in the coal measures, which outcrop on a beach in Wales. This is another 'founding' perception which relates closely to the others, but is nevertheless very different in that it is more an *embedded* line, a hidden, subtle and glowing line rather than a brilliant, active one, or rather it is active but quietly so.

Why did this edge, or in the rock, this seam, captivate me? Was it simply that all three perceptions shared a common form? The idea is founded upon a perception that poses questions about what that edge is, and what it means. The horizon is not an edge in the sense of a finitude, or a boundary, but is a continuum: the surface of the earth we know continues beyond the edge we perceive and is hidden from us, but will eventually return to the very same edge. So here is an edge, which is not an edge, but more accurately a meeting point between two states, which are in motion: so that the edge I see now in this instant is not the edge I see in the next. Furthermore, the sky is limitless in a way in which the earth (and the seas upon it) is not.

In the case of the paintings however there is the implication of a possible, an imaginary space or beyond, which becomes evident through the process of looking at the way the colours, lines, and areas are operating within the virtual space set up by the colour field. It was not immediately evident at the time, or in those sustained moments of making the studies, but only realised later in the assessment of how the space was operating in the finished works.

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<sup>9</sup> This will be entered into in greater depth in Chapter 4.

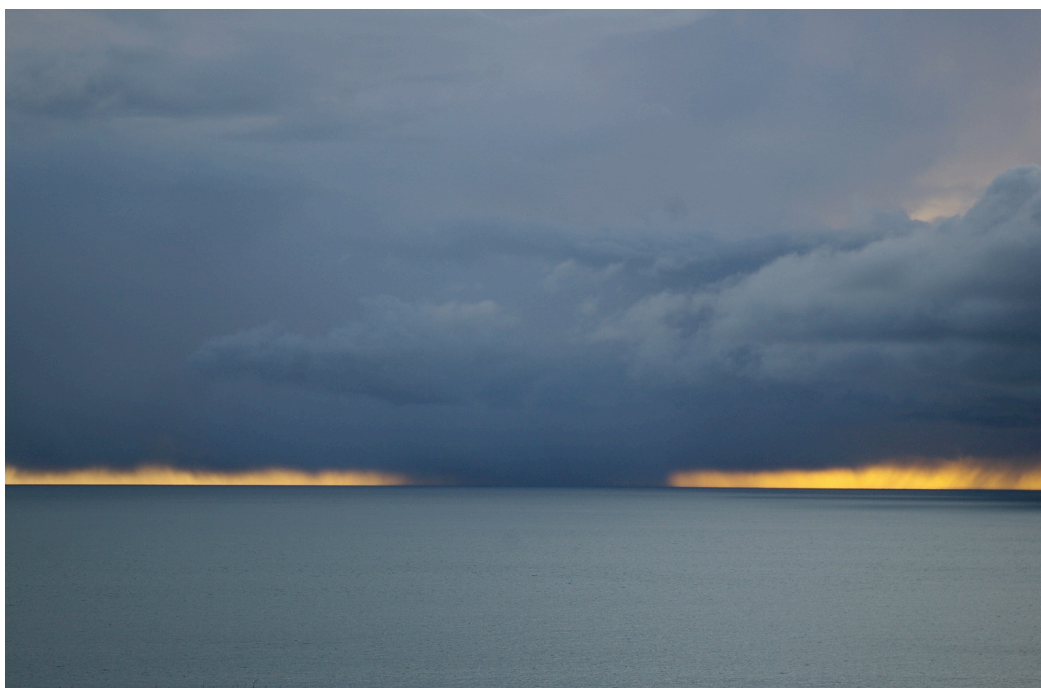


Figure 77. VW *Pembrokeshire Coast* 2010 digital photograph

I took a series of photographs of the meeting between a storm and the sea which passed across a bay in Pembrokeshire, and which until the moment of writing I had treated as a separate set. However I now think they should be included. Even though the medium cannot achieve the kind of relationships or effect I want to achieve through painting, the images may offer something else, and the difference needs to be explored, as mentioned earlier, between the process of drawing and that of photography. What I noticed as extraordinary at the time, quite apart from the light and form of the storm, was the way the horizon appears 'pulled up' where the cloud meets the sea: it must be an illusion produced by the effect of the reversal of tonal values between the sea and the sky at the centre where the edge of the sea is light against the dark cloud, whilst on either side it is dark against a brilliant sky. This illusion is not a consequence of the photograph, but the photograph recording the illusion as it occurred.

In the paintings, the continuity between what can be read as (but not only or literally) the 'sea' space and the (equally ambiguous) 'sky' space (through the use of a continuous wash of colour) means that they can be read as a continuous plane, in which the line can be seen as a brilliant or intense area placed 'upon' it, or 'in' it, or can be an *opening* into another space, another world, another time. In this respect it relates directly to earlier work in which the continuity of the plane is disrupted to reveal another plane or space beneath, or beyond, or which can sometimes be so intense in colour that it floats out in front of the virtual plane that has been set up by the painting.

These (as with all of them in fact) can also be read vertically, and operate in the same way in the sense of the opening up of a gap or a space, but the orientation has completely different connotations. When I first viewed them like this, I was reminded immediately of Barnett Newman's post abstract-expressionist paintings and what he called the 'zip' which divided the paintings vertically, or were situated towards or on the edge. It was this 'haunting' of 'canonical figures' that I found ironically apt in the after-image phenomenon amongst the gesso-ed objects in the studio. Newman, however, was using the vertical orientation because of its possible relation to the standing human figure as well as it being an opening, with a 'beyond'. His approach was frankly symbolic, and he described the paintings as 'dramas' as well as 'ideographs'. At the same time, as 'ideographs' he wanted them to be non-referential, and communicate 'directly', a balancing act, or rather an apparently contradictory position to take up. Nevertheless, there are connections: 'The room space is empty and chaotic, but the sense of space created by my paintings should make one feel, I hope, full and alive in a spatial dome of 180 degrees going in all four directions.' <sup>xiii</sup> The desire to create a sense of infinity, of limitless space, is an aspiration held in common.

The *Horizon/Line* series continues currently through changes of scale, surface, media and the singularity or multiplicity of lines. One of the consequences of needing to show the series to my supervisors during the process of making, is that in presenting the work as a slide show, the element of time, the ephemerality of the moment, and the uncertainty as to where the edge is, becomes emphasized. It made me aware that here was another form of presenting the work, one which had not only the element of time and flux, but also of light, and the work is, in part, *about* light, and is born out of it.

## Summary

In writing about the *Horizon/Line* and *Grace and Danger* series, I sought to understand the way in which two different yet equally vivid and striking forms of intuition could carry within them meanings which I only later realised: the first in the form of two different yet both transcendent intuitions whilst out walking, becoming connected through a change of orientation in the process of working; and the second beginning as an immanent intuition but then being seen transcendently on a channel crossing to France.

What I have discovered through this prolonged study, from the question that arose out of observing what my daughters made of things, through the Masters which took it up, was that the most important and mysterious part of the process, yet the most assumed, was what started it in the first place. I had started with 'intention' (not 'intentionality'), and whilst I had read Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, I had not read the work of Husserl, or Bergson. I had not become acquainted with the terminology of phenomenology, and had not researched into forms of intuition and attention. In pursuing it through these doctoral studies, I have discovered structures and a complexity, which have both challenged my understanding, and yet at the same time confirmed what I already had a sense of, but could not have articulated at that time. The key structures of intentionality, the relation between noesis and noema, the possible layers and enfolded-ness of memory and perception, and particularly the identification of two areas in particular: 'categorical intuition' and 'operative intentionality', these I believe are essential to understanding the nature of seeing-as, and its relation to the creative process.

The question that unites both sets of enquiries, into what the children made, and my own work, revolves around that moment of intuition, of attention held. This 'dimension' of attention, the 'ray of regard' as Husserl terms it, is 'of its own kind', and functions in a way that he implies, depends upon or is composed of fluid changing 'correlations' between the percept and the meaning that accompanies it, between what is seen and what it is seen 'as'.<sup>xiv</sup> The 'systematic enquiry into the essence' of it that is 'one of the fundamental tasks of general phenomenology' is in my view, at the heart of what, by means of materials other (or as well as) those of language, is also the task of the artist, and in my view *it is in the material nature of those enquiries that the substance of the art object resides*.<sup>10</sup> In the next paragraph significantly, he goes on to write about 'attentional formations' having the

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<sup>10</sup> This will be returned to in Chapter 4.

characteristic of subjectiveness & position-taking, & that the ego 'lives' in such acts, 'freely going out of itself or freely withdrawing into itself, spontaneous doing, being somehow affected by the Objects, suffering etc.'

This bringing of 'positive' attention to an intuition, the 'ray of regard'; Luquet's 'ecran colore', and his notion of 'predilection'; and Bergson's attentive recognition all refer to what it is that directs or forms the way our perception is limited, or is selective. However it does not solve the problem of how or why it is that the regard alights upon this rather than that, and why it is we are able to recognize that which is of particular significance to us before we know what it signifies, and which has the potential to lead us on to further meaning. It is these questions that I turn to in Chapter 4, through the concepts of 'categorical intuition' and 'operative intentionality'; and what Husserl turned to in his later writings, then taken up by Merleau-Ponty, the notion of an embodied 'pre-cognitive realm'. I shall also be referring to the key work by Martin Heidegger in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, 'The Origin of the Work of Art'.

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<sup>i</sup> Luntun N.,(ed),(1972) *Systems, Arts Council 1972 - 3*, London: Arts Council: Richard Allen, John Ernest, Malcolm Hughes, Colin Jones, Michael Kidner, Peter Lowe, James Moyes, David Saunders, Geoffrey Smedley, Jean Spencer, Jeffrey Steele, Gillian Wise Ciobotaru. Several of the artists studied at Goldsmith's under Kenneth & Mary Martin. p.6.

<sup>ii</sup> Fineberg J., (1997), *The Innocent Eye, Children's Art and the Modern Artist*, UK and New Jersey U.S.A: Princeton University Press.

<sup>iii</sup> Heidegger M.,(1992)*History of the Concept of Time, Prolegomena*, Trans. Theodore Kisiel. Indiana University Press, p.43.

<sup>iv</sup> Heidegger M.,(1992) *History of the Concept of Time, Prolegomena*, p.60.

<sup>v</sup> Ricoeur P.,(1981) 'Phenomenology and Hermeneutics', *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, ed. and trans.Thompson J.B., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.101-28, 1.1.2.

<sup>vi</sup> Arendt H., (1975) *Men in Dark Times*, Middlesex, England: Pelican, p.162.

<sup>vii</sup> Levinas E., (2008) *Existence & Existents*, trans. Alphonso Lingis, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Duquesne University Press, xxii, xxiii.

<sup>viii</sup> Levinas E., (2008) *Existence & Existents*, trans. Alphonso Lingis, xxvi

<sup>ix</sup> Husserl E., (1983) *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, trans.F Kersten, The Hague: Nijhoff §92

<sup>x</sup> Husserl E., (1983) *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology* §92

<sup>xi</sup> Levinas E., (1995) *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, p.19.

<sup>xii</sup> Fried M., (1966) 'Shape as Form: Frank Stella's New Paintings', *Artforum* V, No.3, New York, Nov. pp.18 - 27.

<sup>xiii</sup> Interview with Dorothy Gees Seckler, (1962) in *Art in America* vol.50 no.2, New York, Summer p.83 and pp.86-87.

<sup>xiv</sup> Husserl E.,(1983) *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book.*, trans. F.Kersten, The Hague: Nijhoff on 'Noesis and Noema.' §92.

## CHAPTER 4

*Attention & Intentionality*

*Umsicht / Circumspection*

*Ereignis / Appropriation*

*Gelassenheit*



intention Disappears  
with Use (johns)  
aspeCts  
otHer  
thAn  
those we had in Mind  
Produce attention

John Cage's 'Mesostic' Poem No 10.

## *Introduction*

In this chapter, my aim is to draw together those forms of intuition and attention identified in earlier chapters, through the work of Luquet and phenomenology, as being of fundamental importance to the creative process in the child and the adult.

These are: the essential relation between attention and intentionality; the role of 'categorical intuition'; and 'operative intentionality'. In his later writing Husserl, followed by Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, emphasized our embodied relation with the world and the sensibility, knowledge and understanding that is acquired through what Merleau-Ponty terms, the 'pre-cognitive realm'. I shall examine what this might mean in relation to our interaction with process and by extension, our relation with the world.

I shall be referring to *Being and Time* and 'The Origin of the Work of Art' in *Poetry, Language, Thought* by Martin Heidegger, and his exploration of the way of seeing that has to do with our relation with things that is practical (*Umsicht/Circumspection*) in order to get at the nature of 'work' in the work of art. I shall then consider certain terms in 'The Origin of the Work of Art' that enter into the process of making which also imply ways of being in and with the world: *Ereignis* and *Gelassenheit*.

Through the preceding chapters, certain 'key' moments have been identified which initiate, or lead to the initiation of a creative process; which occur during the process; and/or which signal the conclusion of it. The first I have myself, in relation to my own work, termed the 'founding perception' and it has, in the examples I have described, been experienced as both an external ('transcendent'), and internal ('immanent') perception, or 'intuition'. The child, before she is able to articulate her thoughts and actions in words, cannot tell us what precisely the 'founding perception' is.

Some of the examples I have given were made at the age of three years, and were named after the completion of the work, in a 'concluding' moment, and it is impossible to know whether the conclusion is a 'product' of a clear intention, or a form that is recognised in what has emerged in the making process: in other words an *interpretation* through a perception of resemblance, as a result of what Luquet termed 'fortuitous realism'. It is important to note here the criticism by Matthews of this notion of the way in which signification is 'discovered' by the child, discussed in Chapters One and Two.<sup>1</sup> Matthews draws attention to the significations that are evident in the so-called 'scribblings' of the infant, through close observation and attention to their spoken and gestural commentaries. In certain of the case

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 1p.20, Chapter 2, p.85.

studies, *Parcels* for example, there was no verbal communication whatsoever, although in the formality of her giving, there appeared to be a clear communication through the *act*, and furthermore there seemed to be possible interpretations of the imagery gathered together in the parcels themselves, which could be taken as symbolic and communicative also.

Whatever interpretation is made, they provide clear and objective evidence the children at this age were able to *spontaneously initiate for themselves* a series of acts, which put images and objects together. Furthermore they were intended either from the beginning, or by the end of the process of making, from the evidence of their final concluding acts, *for another*.

In the making of these constructions, questions were raised about how the images and objects that they included were selected. What kind of perception, or intuition was this?

As I wrote in Chapter 2:

Is this adult interpretation being carried too far? Why did these come to hand, what is this 'ready-to-hand' that is happening here? Out of all the multitude of things available, *this* was chosen and *put together with* a drawing that was made for it, and framed by it, *housed* by it.<sup>2</sup>

I shall return later in the chapter, to examine the nature of what I mean by 'ready-to-hand' here in relation to Heidegger's use of the term. For the present it is important to remain with the question: 'What kind of perception, or intuition was this?'

### *Attention and Intentionality*

In Chapter One, Luquet's observations on Intention in the process of making were examined in relation to Husserl's *Intentionality*. The child I observed, often will have no *intention*, in the sense in which the term is commonly used, as *intending to*, but more a kind of *attention*, which extends to the things that exist or occur around them. I pointed out, however, that *attention* in the Husserlian sense as a directedness of consciousness is *intentional*, in that it is always *of something or towards something*.

Merleau-Ponty in his Preface to *Phenomenology of Perception* declares:

Intentionality as meaning, despite being 'too often cited as the main discovery of phenomenology', that "All consciousness is consciousness of something": there is nothing new in that. Kant showed, in the *Refutation of Idealism*, that inner perception is impossible without outer perception, that the world, as a collection of connected phenomena, is anticipated in the consciousness of my unity, and is the means whereby I come into being as a consciousness. What distinguishes (Husserl's) intentionality from the Kantian relation to a possible object is that the unity of the world, before being posited by knowledge in a specific act of identification, is 'lived' as ready-made or already there.<sup>i</sup>

This distinguishing sense, that the 'unity of the world' is 'lived' as ready-made or already

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<sup>2</sup> Chapter 2, p.117

there' will be returned to later in this chapter, but that the child's attention to particular things should be seen as in itself intentional, and meaningful in advance of the act of drawing is of critical importance to this thesis. Not only is attention in itself *intentional*, but, as Dermot Moran notes at the end of the section devoted to Husserl's exposition on 'Noesis and Noema' in *The Phenomenology Reader*:

Attention is one of the chief themes of modern psychology. Nowhere does the predominantly sensualistic character of modern psychology show itself more strikingly than in the treatment of this theme, for not even the essential connection between attention and intentionality - this fundamental fact: that attention of every sort is nothing else than a fundamental species of *intentionive* modifications - has ever, to my knowledge, been emphasized before.....what is in question here concerns the radically first *beginning* of the theory of attention and that the further investigation must be conducted within the limits of intentionality and, moreover, not forthwith as an empirical, but *first of all* as an eidetical investigation.<sup>ii</sup>

What matters in this passage is not only Moran's emphasis on the discovery by Husserl of the 'essential connection' between attention and intentionality, but especially that 'attention of every sort is nothing less than a fundamental species of *intentionive* modifications.' It points towards the way changes can occur in the process of looking that bring about different interpretations of the same object; and that in the process the 'noemas change through and through,'<sup>iii</sup>

The intuition that I described in Chapter Three on Hungerford Bridge, before reading Husserl, I called a 'founding perception', because it formed the basis of a series of investigations and reflections, with the additional and in this context essential factor, that what followed was not reflective in the mind only, but also involved acts of fabrication, acts which involved working with materials.

At the end of the previous chapter, I wrote: 'the key structures of intentionality, the relation between noesis and noema, the possible layers and enfolded-ness of memory and perception, and particularly the identification of two areas in particular: 'categorical intuition' and 'operative intentionality', these I believe are essential to understanding the nature of seeing-as, and its relation to the creative process.'

The question that unites both sets of enquiries, into what the children made, and my own work, revolves around that moment of intuition, of attention held. As I wrote at the end of the Summary of Chapter 2:

This 'dimension' of attention, the 'ray of regard' as Husserl terms it, is 'of its own kind', and functions in a way that he implies, depends upon or is composed of fluid changing 'correlations' between the percept and the meaning that accompanies it, between what is seen and what it is seen 'as'.<sup>iv</sup> The 'systematic enquiry into the essence' of it that is

'one of the fundamental tasks of general phenomenology' is in my view, at the heart of what, by means of materials other (or as well as) those of language, is also the task of the artist, and in my view *it is in the material nature of those enquiries that the substance of the art object resides*.<sup>3</sup>

### *Categorical Intuition*

I have through the first two chapters argued that the evidence provided by Luquet, and my own collection and observation of what children make, provides sufficient information to confirm that children at a very early age (as early as three years old) see 'categorially.' As Heidegger writes in *History of the Concept of Time, Prolegomena*:

The discovery of categorical intuition is the demonstration, first, that there is a simple apprehension of the *categorical*, such constituents in entities which in traditional fashion are designated as *categories* and were seen in crude form quite early (in Greek philosophy, especially by Plato and Aristotle). Second, it is above all the demonstration that *this apprehension is invested in the most everyday of perceptions and in every experience*.<sup>v</sup>  
(my emphasis)

Seeing is one thing, but acting or engaging in acts as a consequence of what has been seen is another, and the thesis is about what happens when a process gets started as a consequence of something being seen 'as' something. The principle behind the thesis is that by examining the nature of what children do as a consequence of seeing something 'as' something it will inform us about the way they see things in the first place. However one of the main purposes of the thesis is also to present evidence of the child's range of symbolic activity beyond, yet also including, that studied by Luquet and the majority of studies of children's art: drawing with pen or pencil, or painting on paper.

Throughout the first part of Chapter 2, but particularly in the section on *Materials and Methods* I have provided examples of children's awareness of the qualities of a wide range of materials and objects, and ways of working with them, some of which would never be expected to be turned to such a use (a supermarket receipt, orange peel, envelopes). The evidence of the case studies implies that because (in certain cases) the objects are already representations (the 'odalisque', the postcard of the miniature railway, the model of the bridge, the heron/stork, the image of the clock), or have certain 'properties' or characteristics (the length of the till roll, the 'segments' formed by its itemisation), the child is able to make meanings out of and with them, that would otherwise be beyond her capabilities. The use of found objects and materials enables the child to represent things, or put things together, that are identifiable and recognisable: they already have a 'domain' and a set of interrelations.

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<sup>3</sup> Chapter 3, p.197.

In Chapter 2, Part 2, in the section on *Ground and Context*, I drew attention to the nature of categorial intuition, in relation to '*gegenstandlichkeit*', referred to in the quotation from Husserl by Levinas, where it is used to refer to 'a sphere of objects', not simply 'objectivity' as in the Cassell definition. It includes other meanings from *Gegend*: region, and *Gegenstand* - subject, object, matter, item. I went on to point out that a region carries with it the idea of a domain, a ground, an area of a certain extension. The object (subject, matter, item) is one that is situated, and *has a relation to the things around it*, and its region/ domain.

The later sections in Chapter Two, Part 2, all in one way or another, include evidence of an awareness of the *relations between* things. In *Materials and Methods* there is clear evidence of an awareness of the nature of material and the degree of compatibility between a medium, a tool and a surface. Chalk is used on stone, and soft pastel on soft tissue. An object is understood in terms of its manipulability (the envelope opens, and the flap can 'hide' something, and when opened can 'surprise'). In the child's 'appropriation' objects are transferred from one domain to another, but these are not random transfers (the figure is 'housed', the bridge is brought together with the 'railway'). In her interactions with the world, the child makes things out of what is to hand, and this readiness is a two-fold readiness: the child is able and ready to make a thing; and the material or thing is such that it is possible to make something out of it. The specific properties and qualities of the material or object are understood, but in the examples given above, it is most important to emphasize the evidence implies its *domain* is understood also.

The case study *Clapsong Painting* was used to illustrate the possibility that the child was using a form of symbolic gesture in the making of the painting, one I related to the example given by Arnheim, which illustrated 'exemplification': a drawing by a four year old girl which illustrated the movement of a mower by a spiralling continuous line. The continuity in the repetition of the song; the structure; the *qualities* and *form* of the marks used to make the painting; as well as the *way in which they were made* all have representational signification that relate to the declared subject as has been pointed out in the case study. The *objects* of representation, I argued, were not visible objects, but audial and structural. That the painting was named as such ('clapsong') indicated that this was perceived by the child as having a direct relation to the song, and in my account I confirmed that structural and tactile qualities could be identified: the form of 'the round' for example, and the form of the marks made in her 'clapping' it down onto the paper.

In his section on the 'Development of Symbolism in Play' Vygotsky emphasizes the importance of the role of gesture, and it is here that it is possible to find a direct link with Arnheim and Matthews. 'Children do not draw' Vygotsky writes in the preliminary



paragraph, 'they indicate, and the pencil merely fixes the indicatory gesture'.<sup>vi</sup>

From this point of view, therefore, children's symbolic play can be understood as a very complex system of 'speech' through gestures that communicate and indicate the meaning of playthings. It is only on the basis of these indicatory gestures that playthings themselves gradually acquire their meaning - just as drawing, while initially supported by gesture, becomes an independent sign.<sup>vii</sup>

Three year-olds he notes 'can read this symbolic notation with great ease'. He also makes the point that later 'under the influence of this gesture' (to and with the object) 'older children' (four or five year-olds) begin to make one exceptionally important discovery - that objects can indicate the things they denote as well as substitute for them. For example, when we put down a book with a dark cover and say that this will be a forest, a child will spontaneously add, "Yes it's a forest because it's black and dark." ' ' <sup>viii</sup> In other words the child is acquiring the form of symbolization that I have previously identified as 'exemplification', in which the material qualities of the object stand in the same way as a *sample* stands to certain of the qualities of that which is denoted by it.

In my analysis I linked 'exemplification' to Husserl's concept of 'essential intuition' as explained by Macaan in the following passage:

Although the intuition of individuals is radically different from the intuition of essences, a connection obtains between them such that for every essence there corresponds a series of possible individuals as its factual instances and, conversely, for every individual experience an essence can be intuited which exhibits what is purely general in the individual. Thus the intuition of a red instance can always be transformed into the intuition of the essence 'red' while the latter can always be intuitively illustrated through the exhibiting of an instance, either in perception or in fantasy.<sup>ix</sup>

The significance of this relation between the 'essence' and the 'instance', is laid out in an earlier passage passage by Macaan:

By comparison with the act of signifying, which is concrete and specific, ideational abstraction points towards the possibility of an apprehension of abstract and non-specific universals which, as such, form the basis of what Husserl means by the *meant* - that ideal object which functions as the correlate of the meaning-giving activities of consciousness.<sup>x</sup>

This 'ideational abstraction' (of the idea 'red') which Husserl later terms *eidetic intuition*, is 'a type of intuition which is to be met with even in the foundations of logical thought, where it assumes the form of *categorial intuition* (Sixth Investigation).<sup>xi</sup> So that, in the intuition of an 'instance of red' there is also intuited the 'essence of red', as well as the 'categorial' intuition of 'red', which in the example given in the previous chapter, enabled J (at the age of seven years) to make a connection between two reds based on a structure in music, the octave. One

red was an octave 'higher' than the other, which it was *possible to comprehend* through a translation from the tones in music into the tones in colour. She did not know the term 'tone' or that the same term was used for colour and music, but understood the structure of the octave in music, and was able to transfer it and apply it in this instance. It is this form of the child's intuition that I identify as 'categorical'. I used this and other examples as an illustration of the facility of children, which Luquet termed *mobilité d'esprit*, to transfer intuitions across categories, or apply categories to them that are not commonly applied, in order to make meaning out of them. As Macaan points out:

For it is not A and B or A or B itself which has to be explained but the 'being-together' of A and B or the 'one of the two' of A and B. For all that, supersensible, or categorical, intuition is still founded on sensible intuition even though it engenders objects of a different order altogether. The founded acts upon which categorical intuition is based could not exist without the founding acts of sensible intuition.<sup>xii</sup>

In the case studies of the *Matisse Letter*, and *Parcels*, there were clear indications through the (signifying) acts of the children that they were intended as, or *became* messages, in the case of the 'parcel', as a 'gift' (one of three in succession), and in the 'odalisque' by Matisse, placed on the drawing of the house, as a 'letter'. The three-year old knows about parcels and gifts, and the five-year-old knows what a letter is, and through her sliding it through the narrow gap under the bathroom door, it was clearly meant as a message to her father. They appeared both through practical means, to be communicating to us, and communicating things that they could not say in words. If what the children were doing, let us say, R in the case of the *Matisse-letter*, and J with her *Parcels*, were making declarations in the sense that they were showing us something, or as I have posited, communicating something, then we must accept that they were articulating something. By seeing 'something as something' they must already have seen understandingly, and what they put together was an articulation of it.

### *Auslegung/ Interpretation*

At the beginning of the section on 'Understanding and Interpretation' in Chapter V ('Being-in as Such) of *Being and Time*, Heidegger states: 'As understanding, Dasein projects its Being upon possibilities'.....and later:

The projecting of the understanding has its own possibility - that of developing itself [sich auszubilden]. This development of the understanding we call "interpretation" (Auslegung). In it the understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it. In interpretation, understanding does not become something different. It becomes itself.<sup>xiii</sup>

In order to clarify the nature of interpretation as Heidegger articulates it, and to consider it in relation to the observations I have made above of what the children made and showed us, I

shall refer to a particular paragraph from the section from Chapter V, introduced above. I shall refer to it in relation to *interpretation*, and later, also in relation to *circumspection*.

First of all, to concentrate on *interpretation*:

That which is understood gets Articulated when the entity to be understood is brought close interpretatively by taking as our clue the 'something as something'; and this Articulation lies *before* [liegt vor] our making any thematic assertion about it. *In such an assertion the 'as' does not turn up for the first time; it just gets expressed for the first time, and this is possible only in that it lies before us as something expressible* (my italics).<sup>xiv</sup>

It is important to draw attention to a part of the footnote which accompanies this paragraph from MacQuarrie & Johnson's translation:

This paragraph is noteworthy for an exploitation of the prefix 'aus' ('out'), which fails to show up in our translation. Literally an 'Aussage' ('assertion') is something which is 'said out'; an 'Auslegung', ('interpretation') is a 'laying-out'; that which is 'ausdrücklich' ('explicit') is something that has been 'pressed out'; that which is 'aussprechbar' (our 'expressible') is something that can be 'spoken out'.<sup>xv</sup>

As I have referred to in the passage above, according to Heidegger in *Being and Time*, the *Auslegung* is the development of understanding in terms of the structure of the 'as' (*Als*).

Such interpretation is grounded existentially in understanding; the latter does not arise from the former. Nor is interpretation the acquiring of information about what is understood; it is rather the working-out of possibilities projected in understanding.<sup>xvi</sup>

The meanings referred to above distinguish between an interpretation that is 'spoken out', and one that is 'laid out', and surely 'showing' something is a kind of 'laying out' before someone. Furthermore, Heidegger states "For one thing, it can be demonstrated, by considering assertion, in what ways the structure of the 'as', which is constitutive for understanding and interpretation, can be modified." He then gives three different significations to the term 'assertion': 'The primary signification of assertion is "*pointing out*"', the second means no less than "*predication*". We 'assert' a 'predicate' of a 'subject' and the 'subject' is *given a definite character (bestimmt)* by the 'predicate'. Finally "'Assertion" means "*communication*."<sup>xvii</sup>

That which is 'shared' is our *Being towards* what has been pointed out - a Being in which we see it in common. One must keep in mind that this Being-towards is Being-in-the-world, and that from out of this very world what has been pointed out gets encountered.<sup>xviii</sup>

In the case of the *Matisse-letter*, R. drew the form of a house with features recognisably particular to the house she lived in: she placed the 'odalisque' in *our* house. In a similar way, her sister in finding the 'ground' (the postcard of the railway) for the object (the miniature wooden bridge) was finding a memento from a visit to the miniature railway

travelled on by her, with us, *before* the birth of her sister. It was *our shared* history, and being held *in common* I was able to recognise it. One object or image was not found and then immediately given, as it was, but was found and *put together* with another thing, (which *placed it* somewhere very specific, *that we all knew*) and only then was it given.

### *Umsicht / Circumspection*

Heidegger's concept of Dasein is that we are part of something that is beyond our isolated individuality. Our Being as 'thrown' is the recognition that we find ourselves here, and we project ourselves, 'throw' ourselves forward, through the possibilities we encounter.

Dasein always understands itself in terms of its existence - in terms of a possibility of itself: to be itself or not itself. Dasein has either chosen these possibilities itself, or got itself into them, or *grown up in them already* (my italics). Only the particular Dasein decides its existence, whether it does so by taking hold, or by neglecting. The question of existence never gets straightened out except through existing itself. The understanding of oneself which leads *along this way* we call *existentiell*.<sup>4 xix</sup>

Heidegger articulates the way we encounter the world through our involvement with the 'ready-to-hand'. 'To say that 'circumspection discovers' means that the 'world' which has already been understood comes to be interpreted. The 'ready-to-hand' comes *explicitly* into the sight that understands.<sup>xx</sup> Here I want to repeat the quotation already referred to above, but this time in relation to *circumspection*.

That which is understood gets Articulated when the entity to be understood is brought close interpretatively by taking as our clue the 'something as something'; and this Articulation lies *before* [liegt vor] our making any thematic assertion about it. *In such an assertion the 'as' does not turn up for the first time; it just gets expressed for the first time, and this is possible only in that it lies before us as something expressible* (my italics).<sup>xxi</sup>

When I first read the passage from which this is taken, I interpreted it in a particular way, one that took in the kinds of things that I saw the children doing. It seemed to fit the way in which the children were able, by taking 'something as something,' to articulate their interpretation of it. In order for this to happen the 'as' must have been there, and it must have lain before them 'as something expressible'.

Heidegger uses *Umsicht*, or 'circumspection', in relation to 'equipment', 'in-order-to' get something done, which is what they were doing, although not in the way his examples seem to indicate. He gives as examples that we see the door or the hammer and we see them 'as' a door, and 'as' a hammer understandingly, knowing the jobs they do, without necessarily

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<sup>4</sup> 'Existentiella', from Aristotle, is a mode of being which is primary understanding, pre-reflective (but cognitive), structural, non-positional, or we might say 'knowing your way around'.

being conscious of this at the time, or making an assertion about it. 'The 'ready-to-hand' is always understood in terms of a totality of involvements.' 'Even if it has undergone an interpretation', he continues, 'it recedes into an understanding', which we are not necessarily aware of in our daily life. We take things for granted; we know how to go about things without thinking about it too much. Yet this, 'is the essential foundation for everyday circumspective interpretation.'<sup>xxii</sup>

Everyday circumspective interpretation, in which we 'take things for granted, is grounded both in something we *have* in advance (understanding or fore-having) and *see* in advance (*foresight*). In a footnote, the translators relate the terms fore-having (Vorhabe), foresight (Vorsicht) and fore-conception (Vorgriff) to the verb Vorgreifen (to anticipate).

How, then, do we avoid, or get out of this 'hermeneutic circle', the *circle vitiosis* in which we see only that which we already know, and can only come to understand what we know already? The 'elaborate hermeneutical circle' Heidegger says, is unavoidable. In the section of *Being and Time* on *Understanding and Interpretation*, he writes:

*But if we see this circle as a vicious one and look out for ways of avoiding it, even if we just 'sense' it as an inevitable imperfection, then the act of understanding has been misunderstood from the ground up.*<sup>xxiii</sup>

We have to 'come into the circle in the right way' he continues, '...it is the expression of the existential *fore-structure* of Dasein itself.' 'In the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing.'<sup>xxiv</sup> What does Heidegger mean by this? He continues, in a sentence which is hidden somewhat, embedded in a paragraph that is both dense and complex:

To be sure, we genuinely take hold of this possibility only when, in our interpretation, we have understood that our first, last, and constant task is never to allow our fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves.<sup>xxv</sup>

How do we work out 'these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves'? Earlier in the previous chapter, in the final section (§13) *A Founded Mode in which Being-in is Exemplified. Knowing the World*, he has been at pains to challenge the separation implicit in the subject-object relation, and emphasize his enquiry into the nature of Being of the knowing subject. He makes it clear that when concern holds back from 'any kind of producing, manipulating, and the like, it puts itself' (concern) 'into what is now the sole remaining mode of Being-in, the mode of just tarrying alongside....'. But then makes it clear that looking at something 'is sometimes a definite way of taking up a direction towards something', and goes into a series of

consequences that come out of this: '*dwelling*', '*addressing* oneself to something as something', '*interpretation*', and '*making determinate*' in the form of an assertion. In other words, as he has already clearly established with reference to Husserl, there is no such thing as a 'bare perceptual cognition'.<sup>xxvi</sup>

In certain passages under §33 *Assertion as a Derivative Mode of Interpretation* Heidegger distinguishes between different types of interpretation: the 'everyday', 'primordial 'as' of an interpretation which understands circumspectively (the "existential-hermeneutical 'as'") as distinct from the "apophantical 'as' " of the assertion.<sup>xxvii</sup> In making an *assertion* about something that is 'ready-to-hand', there is a modification in our relation to it:

The entity which is held in our fore-having - for instance, the hammer - is proximally ready-to-hand as equipment. If this entity becomes the 'object' of an assertion, then as soon as we begin this assertion, there is already a change-over in the fore-having. Something *ready-to-hand with which* we have to do or perform something, turns into something '*about which*' the assertion that points it out is made. Our fore-sight is aimed at something present-at-hand in what is ready-to-hand. Both *by* and *for* this way of looking at it (Hin-sicht) the ready-to-hand becomes veiled as ready-to-hand. Within this discovering of presence-at-hand, which is at the same time a covering up of readiness-to-hand, something present-at-hand which we encounter is given a definite character in its Being-at-hand-in-such-and-such-a-manner. Only now are we given any access to *properties* or the like. When an assertion has given a definite character to something present-at-hand, it says something about it *as* a "what"; and this 'what' is drawn *from that* which is present-at-hand as such.

He continues:

The as-structure of interpretation has undergone a modification. In its function of appropriating what is understood, the 'as' no longer reaches out into a totality of involvements.<sup>xxviii</sup>

One reading of this passage, though one that I think may be problematic is that the "apophantical 'as' " replaces the "existential-hermeneutical 'as'". However, Heidegger writes that the ready-to-hand 'becomes veiled', not removed. Instead we see its properties, *from a particular point of view*: attention is drawn to the present-at-hand in the ready-to-hand, by the thing in question *being given a definite character* by the apophantical 'as', and this is the *specialty* of assertion. Earlier in this chapter I referred to Husserl's concept of *eidetic* or *categorical intuition* in relation to the colour 'red'. As I wrote then:

in the intuition of an 'instance of red' there is also intuited the 'essence of red', as well as the 'categorical' intuition of 'red', which in the example given in the previous chapter, enabled J (at the age of seven years) to make a connection between two reds based on a structure in music,



the octave.<sup>5</sup>

Through the assertion we are invited to see a property or properties evident in the present-at-hand in a certain way. In the example above, J alluded to a specific property that 'red' possesses, and is a property that all reds hold. It is also a property that other things also possess, that they have in common: every 'instance' of 'red' can be placed on a tonal scale from light to dark, just as all 'instances' of colour, or things with colour, or indeed as all material objects can. Furthermore, in designating these changes as 'tones' there is a recognition of a common structure, a sequence of gradations, that is similar to that found in music: notes can be placed on a scale, (the octave). Through a property made evident in the 'present-at-hand' by the assertion, my daughter pointed out a structure that colour and music hold in common.

To take another example, a broom is the same length whatever you might do with it: its length is independent of its 'involvements', as is its wood, and its bristles. A student I taught went on later to do a Masters in Textiles at Manchester Metropolitan University, and for his graduation exhibited a sculptural piece, which presented upturned heads of a dozen stiffly bristled brooms in a row, transforming them into a 'wall' of bristles. These were shown alongside textile works that exploited the moiré effect, and therefore enabled the viewer moving around the row of broom heads, to see the same effect in the bristles. An analogy was drawn between things that are never usually brought together, and could be seen 'normally' as antithetical. In so doing the linear properties of the bristles, their separateness and stiffness which are an essential property they possess which enables them to do the work we expect them to do, became a quite different thing *doing a completely different 'job'* showing us something about the way we see things. In the process of looking we were made aware of the bristles, *both* as an essential part of the ready-to-hand (broom) *and* in terms of properties they possess that connect categorically to other kinds of things. *By putting them together in the way he did*, their linearity, and the openness of their arrangement, which allows light to shine through, created the sharp contrast necessary for the moiré effect to occur. We were made aware of these properties through their placing and their context.

In the examples given above, in the upturned brooms, and in the *Parcels*, things were laid out in a way that attention was brought to them of a different kind to that normally given them: they were given a particular character by being brought together. In the artwork that uses found objects, the 'existential-hermeneutical 'as' of circumspection is transformed, from its receding into the background in the presentation of the thing, to standing out. It is no longer hidden, but made evident, in such a way that we see 'its properties or the like', or we

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<sup>5</sup> See p.206

see its properties differently. As Heidegger states in the paragraph already referred to above,

When an assertion has given a definite character to something present-at-hand, it says something about it *as* a "what"; and this 'what' is drawn *from that* which is present-at-hand as such.

This 'what' is no longer hidden, but made evident, in such a way that we see 'its properties or the like': those properties that make it what it is, in other words *that constitute its essence*. This is I think what Heidegger means in 'The Origin of the Work of Art', when he says that the material is not 'used up'.<sup>xxix</sup> However it is important here to emphasize the difference between forms of assertion.

I referred earlier to a footnote at the beginning of the section on 'Understanding and Interpretation' in Chapter V ('Being-in as Such) of *Being and Time* that I think is most important.<sup>6</sup> Macquarrie and Johnson point out the range of meanings of 'Aus' for example, 'Aussage', to 'speak out', and 'Auslegung', to 'lay out'. In laying something out, as in the example of the broom-heads above, a different kind of work is involved to that when we speak out, 'Aussage'. There are also differences in the work involved in laying something out. J. placing found objects together, wrapping them, and showing them to me in the *Parcels*, is different to fabricating the objects herself. The nature of work in the artwork is what concerns Heidegger in 'The Origin of the Work of Art' and this will be returned to later in this chapter.

It is true that Heidegger's distinction between the 'present-at-hand' and the mode of Being as 'tarrying-alongside', on the one hand, and the 'ready-to-hand' with its mode of Being of 'manipulating and putting to use' appears to imply a clear demarcation between such types of thing. The way in which they are distinguished, the examples given, and the terms that are used in the translation of Heidegger's text, imply a very specific and limited kind of use. 'Equipment' implies technical 'gear' or 'tackle', and a very specific and 'appropriate' use. It does not seem to include the kind of things that I observed my children doing.

However it is important to point out that in the original German, the term is not so clearly defined: in the Young and Haynes 'das Zeugsein' is translated as 'equipmentality' or 'equipmental being'.<sup>xxx</sup> The meaning of 'Zeug' is much wider, and includes all sorts of things: the first term that is used in Cassell is simply 'stuff'.<sup>xxxii</sup> It includes cloth, textiles, clothes, implements and equipment, utensils, dough and yeast (!) but also is used as a collective term for 'matter', 'things'; 'rubbish, bosh, nonsense, trash'. The related term 'Zeuge' means 'witness', and 'Zeugen' means to 'beget, procreate, generate, produce and engender'. That the related terms produce such a wide range of possibilities allows in my view for an interpretation which can include the examples I have given of what the children made of

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<sup>6</sup> see p. 208.

things, the key distinction being the nature of our relation with the 'stuff' of the world, our interaction with, and intuition of it.

From the moment the infant begins to encounter the world, 'things' are mysterious, unpredictable, and are not thought of in terms of 'to use' or 'not to use' yet are invariably touched, held and tested out in all sorts of ways, before they become in any way 'known'. They are 'things' in the sense above, the 'stuff' of the world, without clear demarcations of appropriate or inappropriate use. The translation of the term into 'equipment' implies a prescribed use, and certainly later in the chapter, when Heidegger refers to the Sun as 'equipment' he is not using the term in this way. It is more that these are things with which we are familiar, and we know how they work and how we can use them, or interact with them; they are connected to a 'totality of involvements'.

This is where Luquet's application of the term 'circumspection', as 'testing' or rather to be absolutely precise, as both 'speculative' and 'practical' is clearly different:

Certainly, as we have seen for analogical transfer (§31 - §32), some analogies drawn by children can be mistaken; some of their imaginative creations are not viable; and, because of their lack of experience, their hypotheses are not well founded. But hypothesis is an indispensable resource for both speculation and practical knowledge as long as its flights of fancy are subjected to correction through extended contact with reality. Otherwise if the mind does not acquire *circumspection*, it remains inactive and incapable of progress.<sup>7 xxxii</sup>

Things are animated that are inanimate, and things are put to use in ways both appropriate and inappropriate (as Luquet has pointed out, above), symbolically *and* practically, albeit sometimes in ways that cannot be grasped as having logic, or an association that is perceptible. Things encountered in an everyday walk by a three-year old child: stones, a stick, a curiously shaped leaf, are picked up, felt, weighed in the hand, and tested to see what can be done with them, or examined with acute attention. The stone is scratched onto the paving to see what mark it might make, the stick *will* reach the lower leaves on the branch above his head. There are occasions when we have to use whatever is 'to hand' and it is at such times we realise the nature of how tools are discovered, or identified as needed, and how we discover the *qualities* and *properties* of the thing 'in hand'.

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<sup>7</sup> 'Elle ne produira tous ses heureux effets qu'en se laissant discipliner, l'esprit devra acquérir de la circonspection: mais sans elle, il resterait inerte et incapable de progres.'. G.H.Luquet *Le Dessin Enfantin*, Paris: Delachaux et Niestle, 1977. 188 Costall translates 'discipliner' as 'correction' which has a different sense in my view: the child's hypothesis is 'disciplined' by reality, in that it has to work with it and 'fit' it appropriately; 'correction' implies the correction of a mistake. It is interesting, and telling I think, that Luquet then goes on to emphasize the importance of chance, and the lucky accident in the process of children's drawing 'comme dans la vie'.

### *Operative Intentionality*

It is at this point I would like to return to the passage from Merleau-Ponty quoted at the beginning of this chapter:

What distinguishes (Husserl's) intentionality from the Kantian relation to a possible object is that the unity of the world, before being posited by knowledge in a specific act of identification, is 'lived' as ready-made or already there.

In his Preface, Merleau-Ponty continues:

Husserl distinguishes between intentionality of act, which is that of our judgements and of those occasions when we voluntarily take up a position - the only intentionality discussed in *The Critique of Pure Reason* - and operative intentionality, or that which produces the natural and ante-predicative unity of the world and our life, being apparent in our desires, our evaluations, and the landscape we see, more clearly than in our objective knowledge, and furnishing the text which our knowledge tries to translate into precise language.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

In his later writing, the so-called 'third stage of his genetic phenomenology', Husserl emphasized our embodied relation with the world and the sensibility, knowledge and understanding that is acquired through what later Merleau-Ponty would call the 'pre-cognitive realm'.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty (as well as Bergson) all turn in the end to a 'pre-cognitive', 'supra-intellectual' (Bergson), realm that operates in a way that is 'pre-conscious' or 'unconscious'. As Macaan points out, in late Husserl there is a growing interest in the phenomenology of the body:

In the third period of his genetic phenomenology Husserl saw the need to replace his naturalistic concept of the world with a more genuinely primordial concept of the life-world (*Lebenswelt*). If the self is originally an embodied being whose life is therefore manifest in action, the relation to the surrounding world will inevitably assume the form of an interaction.<sup>xxxv</sup>

This is laid out in the 2nd Volume of *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology & to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, subtitled *Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*<sup>xxxvi</sup>. It concerns the subject-object correlation, the relation between the subject's 'experiencing' and 'that which is experienced'.<sup>8</sup> The following are certain extracts from a paper by

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<sup>8</sup> Published posthumously, and edited by two of his former assistants, Edith Stein and Ludwig Landgrebe. Stein, a significant philosopher in her own right, and who died in Auschwitz in 1944, has

Elizabeth A. Behnke:

For Husserl, our very openness to the world essentially involves a kinaesthetic engagement with what is most immediately, sensuously given in such a way that the genetic origins of transcendental logic itself can be traced back to these kinaesthetic capabilities and performances and their correlative sensuous “givens” (see *Husserliana* 11).

The lived experience of embodied motility goes far beyond movement that is actively initiated by the I: there are also movements such as breathing, which normally goes on without my active intervention, yet can indeed be deliberately altered to some extent. Husserl therefore speaks of all such bodily movement as pertaining to the I in a broad sense that encompasses, but also includes more than, the active, awake I. For example, habitual movement patterns such as playing a familiar piece on the piano can indeed proceed without my explicit, moment by moment direction, yet are still lived as “mine,” and although they may often remain marginal, they can also be informed with awareness—or with a kind of “active allowing,” as when I lend them my “fiat” and am consciously letting the movement unfold. Thus here motility is a broader concept than agency in the strict sense whereby an “agent” would be actively, explicitly involved in initiating and directing the action throughout.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Macaan writes in his foreword to the section on Husserl: 'In place of a Cartesian 'I think', we now find an "I do" (Crisis p.161) or as Merleau-Ponty will call it, a *practical cogito*'<sup>xxxviii</sup> (which later, Macaan finds 'paradoxical'): 'a formula which combines in one expression the two extremes of (embodied) action and (disembodied) reflection'.<sup>xxxix</sup>

But is it paradoxical, and are these 'extremes'? Reflection is not necessarily disembodied, unless it is assumed that writing is not embodied. Indeed it is not often until the act of writing commences, (or making, or speaking), that what has to be said, can become formed in *such a way*, can be found, or can *emerge*. Engagement in expression (and surely reflection is a form of expressing to oneself) through material, whether through drawing, making, playing, performance, writing or utterance, is embodied. Furthermore, with the acquisition of skills, the child and the adult artist gain possession of knowledge bound up with the 'sight' that is specific to a particular way of going about things (let us say for example, a method of working with materials), whether cutting paper with scissors, drawing with pastel, making a wash with paint, balancing algebraic equations, wielding a brush, incising a line, constructing a set of colour relations, or ordering a space: for these determine to some degree *the terms in which the world is seen*. To the

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since been identified as having contributed her own philosophical views to the work.

printmaker working with carborundum and deep emboss, the forms of the perceived world will be embossed and the grain of carborundum will be amongst them. The painter working with washes of transparent colour will see in transparent layers, just as the filmmaker will mentally note camera angles and types of movement through space. The dramatist will listen to the conversation of the two people on the bus, and not cut it out of her attention. Only through getting to know a medium or a method by performing it, is it possible to know what can be done with it, and through these acts of engagement have the facility to act *knowingly* without having to think about it first.

I would like to propose that the making of an artwork, and responding to it, depends upon this primordial kind of knowing, and that through the artwork it can be made *evident*. It is as Gadamer says, and as I have argued in relation to the ready-to-hand and the present-at-hand earlier, not *re-presentational* but *presentational*. Art, and Heidegger would say, Poetry, makes evident that which is hidden: it *draws out*. In Chapter 3, I reflected on different forms of intuition and their relation to my own practice:

The second type of intuition is 'immanent', in that it occurs in the mind. These are also not sought, they 'happen': they occur in such a way that they seem to be chanced upon spontaneously, that is, without consciously thinking them up. When they are sought, they rarely, if ever, occur, although (and this is most important) it is necessary for there to be a *readiness*. However they not only 'happen': in the examples that I reflect on, they are 'attended to'. My attention was caught by them. How does it happen and why should it be that my attention was so caught?

My attention was caught *because* there was a *certain kind of* readiness. In the case of the *Horizon Series* the immanent intuition that came to mind was something I had made before, albeit differently, (observations on colour stripped down to their essential relation by drawing a line in a ground) which having been made had remained 'in a dark corner' as Husserl put it:

In the latter case, what was originally kept in sight falls into the background without totally disappearing from the field of consciousness. In a new *cogito*, "the preceding *cogito* ceases to shine, falls in the darkness, but is still kept alive, although in a different manner". (Ibid., § 115, p.236) <sup>xl</sup>

It is important to remember as pointed out by Guerlac in her reference to Magritte, that the image created is not a mimetic representation, but a *synthesis*:

'Each problem, he writes, involves three terms: "the object, the thing attached to it in the shadows of my mind, and the light in which this thing should appear (*devait partir*)" (*Ecrits*, 111). This elusive third term is crucial to the articulation of the other two. It is precisely this act of synthesis that Magritte calls "resemblance" and characterizes as an activity of inspired

thought.<sup>xli</sup>

I likened this synthetic aspect of the idea or image, which for Magritte was a 'solution' to a 'problem', to Luquet's concept of the 'Internal Model'. However an important addition to, or rather ingredient of this *synthesis* may be the conflict that is contained within it: the juxtaposition of things not normally associated with one another, or in direct opposition to one another.

It is what Heidegger in 'The Origin of the Work of Art' puts forward as an opposition between World and Earth, in his notion of the *Rift* which is 'not a rift (*Riss*), as a mere cleft is ripped open; rather, it is the intimacy with which opponents belong to each other.' What emerges from this conflict is the *figure* or *Gestalt*, which fixes it in place, its placing (*Stellen*) and its framework (*Ge-stell*).<sup>xlii</sup> Heidegger found his own articulation of this idea inadequate, if not misleading, in particular the contradiction between the 'fixing in place of truth' and the 'letting happen of the advent of truth', as he is at pains to elucidate in the Addendum of 1956. Here he writes 'the "fixing in place" of truth, rightly understood, can never run counter to the "letting happen".'<sup>xliii</sup> In the section in Chapter 2, on 'Ground and Context' I drew attention to the way in which children have an acute awareness of the 'ground' in which an object is situated, and in which they situate an object, or drawing. The placing, or setting up that Heidegger means by *Stellen* and *Ge-stell* is much more complex, but is in my view related to this fundamental situating of a form (*Gestalt*). It will be important to return to this element in the Conclusion when examining the relation between the creative process of the child and the adult artist.

In my discussion of the distinction between the "existential-*hermeneutical* 'as of circumspection' and the "*apophantical* 'as' " of the assertion earlier in this chapter, I proposed that one of the ways in which the artwork reveals or shows the nature of something is that we are made aware of, or our attention is brought back to its *properties*. In addition, the 'present-at-hand' is revealed as having a connection with something else. By de-contextualising something, or rather, by re-contextualising something, a new meaning can emerge. By this means, amongst others, the artwork is able as Arnheim would say, to present 'a state of affairs'. In the 'The Origin of the Work of Art' Heidegger discusses at great length the 'thingly character of things', in order to get at the nature of the work of art, for after all, 'The picture hangs on the wall like a rifle or a hat' and 'Beethoven's quartets lie in the storerooms of the publishing house like potatoes in a cellar.'<sup>xliv</sup>

Occasionally, we still have the feeling that violence has long been done to the thingly element of things and that thought has played a part in this violence, for which reason people disavow thought instead of taking pains to make it more thoughtful. But in defining the nature of the thing, what is the use of a feeling, however certain, if thought alone has the right to speak



here? Perhaps however what we call feeling or mood, here and in similar instances, is more reasonable - that is, more intelligently perceptive - because more open to Being than all that reason which, having meanwhile become *ratio* was misinterpreted as being rational.....To be sure the current thing-concept always fits each thing. Nevertheless it does not lay hold of the thing as it is in its own being, but makes an assault upon it <sup>xlv</sup> 9

In order to understand the 'equipmental character of equipment' and differentiate it from the 'workly character of the (art) work', Heidegger turns to a pictorial representation: the painting of peasant shoes by Van Gogh. (He does not cite the exact painting, but says only that Van Gogh 'painted such shoes several times'). The essential quality of what characterizes these shoes is what Heidegger sees happening in the painting: 'This painting spoke', he declares. 'The artwork lets us know what shoes are in truth. It would be the worst self-deception to think that our description, as a subjective action, had first depicted everything thus and then projected it into the painting'.<sup>xlvi</sup> This is an example of the 'disclosure' that he refers to, which is 'set to work' in the artwork. This is not in any way dependent upon a mimetic model of art. On this Heidegger is emphatic: 'it is, on the contrary, the reproduction of the thing's general essence.' But then where and how is this general essence, so that artworks are able to agree with it?' <sup>xlvii</sup> How does the artist 'reproduce' it? Heidegger does not answer this question in any direct way: he moves on to the idea of the Greek temple, and to a poem by C.F.Meyer "Roman Fountain" which appears to provide (even in translation) an illustration of how the poem is able to communicate the essential nature of 'fountain': there are concrete forms of signification that through alliteration, and rhyme give a repeating, cascading effect: 'fills' and 'spills', 'round' and 'ground', with the final two lines exemplifying a sense of continuous flow.

In Chapter Two, I gave an account of the experience of standing before Vermeer's painting, 'A Maid-Servant Pouring out Milk'.<sup>10</sup> I identified specific qualities in the painting, (in the laying on of the paint itself) and in the colour, that posed questions as I looked at it, pondered on it, or as he might say, 'dwelt' with it. In this 'sojourn' I came to the realisation that there was a connection between certain parts of the painting, (not dissimilar perhaps in content to that experienced by Heidegger) which was one of 'the earth'. This was a painting about the connection this woman has with the earth, the woman and the bread, the basket, the jug, and the milk. I pointed out that the woman's cheeks, her hands, the rim of the jug, the crust of the bread, and the wicker basket that holds it, 'all have the same rough painterly texture, and are flecked with crimson and

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<sup>9</sup> A (three years old) said one afternoon in my company, eating a cake, and looking at his plate, 'a *crumb* isn't a *thing* is it?' It was said in such a way that it was clearly self-evident a crumb could not possibly be considered to be a *thing*. There had been no mention of 'things' or 'thing-ness' beforehand.

<sup>10</sup> Chapter 2 *Objects of Representation* p. 88-89

white in amongst the rich ochres. They are quite different in texture to the rest of the painting'. There is a thickness, and richness to the paint in its application, which contrasts with other areas that are very thinly painted. The woman is a 'fruit' of the earth, just as all the 'things' in the painting that are connected through painterly devices (the texture of the paint, the colours used), are also 'fruits' of a similar kind.

This I referred to in Chapter 2 as an example of *exemplification*:

The work, or a part of the work possesses the very qualities to which it refers, but it also has a much wider reference in that its signification is not confined to a particular object, but to an entire class of qualities, which may relate to a wide variety and number of objects or things, either analogically or structurally.<sup>11</sup>

As I have argued earlier, the 'apophantical as' can bring us back to the properties or the qualities of the thing itself, but in this case it is also in order to connect it to other things with which it has qualities or properties in common, and through which it is possible to communicate a *Sachverhalte* or 'a state of affairs'. Young, in his commentary on what Heidegger means when he distinguishes between the way the material is 'used up' in equipment but 'shines forth' in the artwork, argues that we are not always attentive to the materials in the work. In some cases, he claims, the material denies, or defies the nature of the materials used. He cites the weight of stone, which in the Gothic cathedral is not made evident in 'its gravity-defying, heavenward ascent'.<sup>xlviii</sup> Furthermore he claims that if we do become attentive to, for example, the spatial organization of the frame in a film, it is symptomatic of *losing* attention rather than holding it. I would argue rather that we are astonished at the Gothic Cathedral precisely *because* we know the weight of stone, and to become aware of the spatial organization of the frame is an added dimension in the viewing of a film that those who make films, and those who appreciate them, are acutely aware of. I would also argue that because the viewer is not aware of it, does not mean that it is not happening. When we do respond to the material qualities of an artwork, Young continues, it is because of its 'sensuous beauty', rather than 'conceptual inscrutability'.<sup>12</sup> Despite this, on the following page, Young gives two precise examples of the way in which materials do *not* disappear, and through exemplification communicate essential ideas that go far beyond 'sensuous beauty':

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<sup>11</sup> Chapter 2. p. 86

<sup>12</sup> Young claims that we respond to the material qualities of an artwork because of their 'sensuous beauty' and that Heidegger 'has...lapsed into 'aesthetics', into insisting that the proper response to art requires the adoption of the 'disinterested', 'aesthetic attitude'. On the contrary he, in referring to 'sensuous beauty', returns us to the naive 'aesthetic attitude' that such a thing exists independently of meaning. It is unfortunate that he adds 'this fact alone should be sufficient to reveal the forgettable character of the entire passage', when in fact it is essential to Heidegger's argument.

There are a thousand and one ways in which, for the right audience, 'earth rises up through world'. In the mediaeval cathedral stained-glass windows are a powerful metaphor for the transparency of the world, in the altarpiece it is the gold which allows the numinous to shine 'through' world.<sup>xlix</sup>

### *Ereignis and Gelassenheit.*

In *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*<sup>13</sup> Young remarks that the 'Origin of the Work of Art' was written at the time (1936-8) of a 'turn' in his thinking, and reflects a 'transformation' in Heidegger himself, from his thesis in *Being and Time* (that it is Death that brings us to a sense of our need to be 'authentic', to 'authentic Dasein') to one that is more positive, and that also is not under our control (*Gelassenheit*).<sup>i</sup> Patience, waiting, and thankfulness or gratitude are all associated with the experience of *Ereignis*, but it is an *active* waiting, not so much waiting *for*, but waiting *on*. At the beginning of the Chapter, I referred to the translation of *Ereignis* as 'event of appropriation' but it is also translated as 'the happening of truth', or 'disclosure'. 'The 'Event' appropriates us', says Young, and it happens as 'transport' and 'enchantment'. Young uses the word 'epiphany', and relates it to the poet's experience of the 'wonderfully all present':

the wonder that around us a world worlds at all, that there is something rather than nothing, that there are things and we ourselves are in their midst, that we ourselves are' (*GA52*,p.64)<sup>ii</sup>

Owens' paper on 'Heidegger's Philosophy of Art' draws on a number of other later texts. Both Owens and Hofstadter point out that 'The Origin of the Work of Art' never became a complete philosophy of art, but it brought a dimension to the understanding of art that 'Aesthetics' hitherto had not. Heidegger was not concerned with aesthetics, but with as Owens puts it, the 'Being-question', and the essay Owens interprets as 'a unique perspective on the creative process, the response to the work of art, and art's essential function in human life'.<sup>lii</sup> The importance of *Ereignis* is emphasized by Heidegger himself in the Addendum to the essay written in 1956, to which both Owens (and Hofstadter in his Introduction) refer:

Reflection on what *art* may be is completely and decidedly determined only in regard to the question of *Being*. Art is considered neither an area of cultural achievement nor an appearance of spirit; it belongs to the *disclosure of appropriation* [*Ereignis*] by way of which the "meaning of Being"(cf. *Being and Time*) can alone be defined. What art may be is one of the questions to which no answers are given in the essay. What gives the impression of such an answer are directions for questioning. (Cf. the first sentences of the Epilogue).<sup>liii</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> It is worth noting that in the second sentence of Hofstadter's Introduction he declares that 'these pieces should not be thought of as under the heading "aesthetics," nor even under that of "philosophy of art."

Both Owens and Hofstadter point out the emphasis laid on *Wesen* (Essence) in *Anwesenheit* (Presence) in what Heidegger discovered, through his etymological investigation into the Greek terms, to be 'the meaning of being'. In terms of the essence of art, Owens writes 'we must do so from *his* use of the word, however peculiar, unorthodox, or idiosyncratic it might be. At this point we must understand that the essence of art has something to do with enduring as presence and that it is linked in some fashion with emerging and living' (and I add in my notes on the paper 'to dwell, to sojourn').<sup>liv</sup> Owens is interested in articulating his interpretation of Heidegger's reflections on art as offering original insights into both the *creative process* of art, and the *preserving* of art, not in the case of the latter, in the sense of the museum, but more the active keeping alive, the *dwelling* in the work that the work invites, and the respondent *takes responsibility for*.

What Heidegger is referring back to in his last sentence above is his concern to elucidate, and bring to resolution what appear contradictory notions: the "fixing in place of truth" and the "letting happen of the advent of truth." The first implies rigidity, and as he puts it a 'blocking', whereas he goes on to emphasize, it is a "movement". *Gelassenheit* is as Owens puts it, 'attunement to the fluidity of *Ereignis*.' 'First and foremost,' says Owens, 'the word *Ereignis*' expressed for Heidegger the belonging-together of Being and time and the fluid relations between them.<sup>liv</sup> '*Gelassenheit*' in Cassell's Dictionary is translated as 'self-possession, calmness, composure, resignation; even temper, patience; deliberateness.'<sup>lvi</sup>

In Heidegger the term is used to signify 'releasement' or 'letting be', derived from 'lassen' ('to allow').

*Gelassenheit* carried for Heidegger both proscriptive and prescriptive implications. Proscriptively, it means that one gives up conventional, familiar co-ordinations of things, thoughts and acts. It means that we do not interpose between ourselves and the things of our world anything - in particular, familiar or canny sorts of attachments - that might disguise their always-manifold and ever-changing character. In *Gelassenheit* one gives up all standard and established grounding in the way things have been seen and interpreted. Prescriptively, *Gelassenheit*, in tune with *Ereignis*, discovers new perspectives on things, allows the not-yet-uncovered - the heretofore concealed - to reveal itself and therefore allows one to dwell in the world in a new, hitherto unsuspected way.<sup>lvii</sup>

It may present us with something we already know but have not realized, a 'state-of-affairs' or *Sachverhalte*. In giving up the 'conventional, familiar co-ordinations of things' there is the possibility of a 'setting into work' of something that is unconventional, that challenges the familiar, that is 'extraordinary' and brings things together in new ways, or at least differently to what is usually expected. The conflict referred to earlier, that is set into place by the *Gestalt* is the bringing together in their belonging, things which are in opposition, or set

apart, not in the sense of a rigid fixing but in a way in which *their createdness is made evident*: 'in contrast to all other modes of production, the work is distinguished by being created so that its createdness is part of the created work.'<sup>lviii</sup>

'More often than not it was on the dynamics of *thatness* that Heidegger focused his attention when he spoke of essence. 'Essence' (*Wesen*) therefore, while retaining something of its substantive sense, had in Heidegger's vocabulary a predominantly verbal meaning.'<sup>lix</sup> As I pointed out in Chapter 2, Philip Rawson writes in *Seeing through Drawing* about a drawing by Van Gogh (*The Sower in the Rain*, 1890, a chalk drawing):

all the lines express movement and life; and that movement and life are not only in the figure of the sower who is sowing the seed, but actually in the field - the ground upon which he is working. The urgent movements of the clusters of lines show us how the man is *sowing*, the weather is *weathering*, the field *fielding*, the cottage *cottaging*, almost literally as verbs.<sup>lx</sup>

The movement out of the studio and into 'life' as it is lived, that is evidenced in the aspirations of the artists of *Arte Povera*, *Fluxus*, and the fluidity and performative elements that entered into the work of other artists referred to in the section of the thesis examining 'Process' (Eva Hesse, Louise Bourgeois, Cornelia Parker) can be seen as ways of letting be, or letting go. They are ways of allowing *Ereignis* to occur, in conjunction with *Gelassenheit* in the sense of 'a readiness for action', in which the material does what it does in its own way, out of which the form arises. This letting go, this 'releasement', can occur in many ways, but one of the ways it can be seen happening is in the relation between the artist and the idea, or the material, or the method, or the strategy.<sup>14</sup>

This takes us back to the meanings I drew attention to above of *gegend*, *Gegenstand* and 'ground', signifying 'domain'. One of the most striking things that children do is transfer things from one domain to another, in ways that surprise but also make sense, but a different kind of sense to one we might expect or assume. '*Gegen*' by itself, means 'towards, to, in the direction of; against, opposed to, contrary to, over against, opposite to; compared with; in the presence of; in exchange, in return for, for; about, approximately.'<sup>lxi</sup> Here we have in the complexity of the term, a map almost of the possible dynamic relations between things in a domain, and between domains. Luquet's term '*mobilité d'esprit*' refers to precisely this kind of mobility of mind, which draws together unexpected combinations, because for the child the categories are not yet fixed, things are in the process of being discovered and

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<sup>14</sup> This is not only the case with the artist, but with any creative endeavour in whatever form. Henri Poincaré's essay on 'Mathematical Creation' included in the collection of writings edited by Brewster Ghiselin on *The Creative Process* describes vividly and with great precision the ways in which after arduous work on a problem over many days, he gave it up, and relaxed, but whilst in a reverie, out walking, or in one case, when boarding a bus, the solution came to mind. Furthermore he states: "Among chosen combinations the most fertile will often be those formed of elements drawn from domains which are far apart." University of California Press, Mentor Book 1959. pp.33 - 42

experimented with.

For the adult the task is more difficult; the categories are more defined; the domains differentiated; habits entrenched; the amount of knowledge acquired so much greater, and the persistence required for the work therefore much more arduous. In Gerhard Richter's private journal the painter writes about his own process of working:

Accept that I can plan nothing.

Any consideration that I make about the 'construction' of a picture is false and if the execution is successful then it is only if I partially destroy it or because it works anyway, because it is not disturbing and looks as though it is not planned.

Accepting this is often intolerable and also impossible, because as a thinking, planning human being it humiliates me to find that I am powerless to that extent, making me doubt my competence and any constructive ability. The only consolation is that I can tell myself that despite all this I *made* the pictures, even when they take the law into their own hands, do what they like with me although I don't want them to, and simply come into being somehow. Because anyway I am the one who has to decide what they should ultimately look like (the making of pictures consists of a large number of yes and no decisions and a yes decision at the end). Seen like this the whole thing seems quite natural to me though, or better nature-like, living, in comparison with the social sphere as well.<sup>lxii15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> An entry from the artist's private journal, published in the catalogue *Gerhard Richter*, London: Tate Gallery, 1991, pp 123-4.

## REVISED MODEL OF PROCESS 2

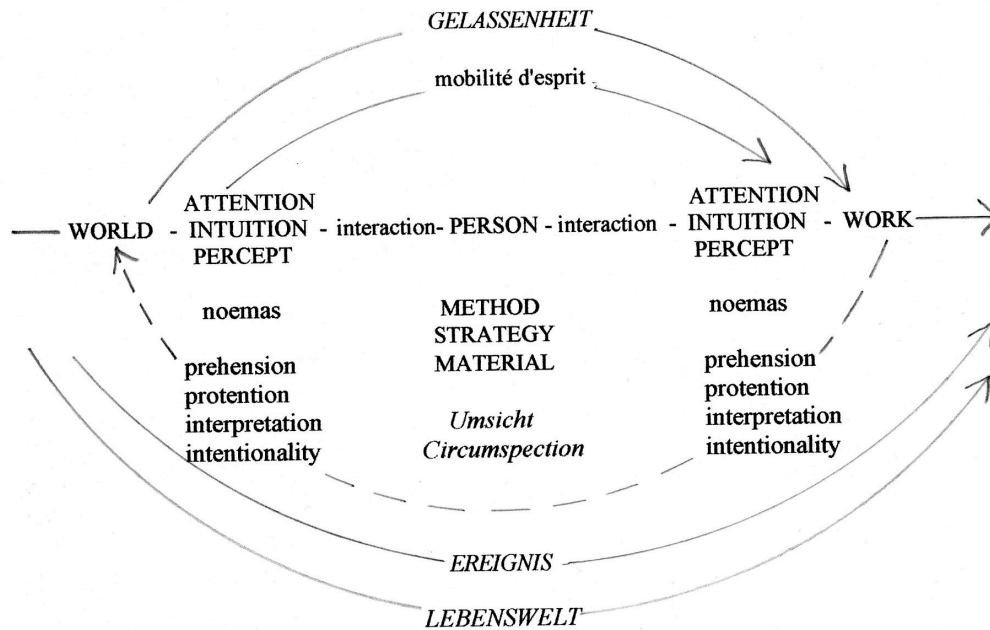


Figure 78

The model of process that has been revised throughout the thesis until this latest model has, as can be seen clearly, been simplified to some extent, but increased in dynamics. What happens when we see something, and what happens when we make something, and the connections between the two can be seen to have become almost symmetrical. I make no distinction between the process of the child and the adult artist: differences are in the depth of experience, and the knowledge that is brought to it. Certain differences and similarities between the child and adult artist are proposed in the Conclusion.

In this revised model I have incorporated *Gelassenheit* and *Ereignis*, *Umsicht* and *Circumspection*, each with their own specific role. *Gelassenheit* and *Ereignis* are seen as over-arching elements, as is *mobilité d'esprit*, or inherent in the entire process as ways of being. *Ereignis* for example is interpreted here as 'readiness' (or 'waiting on' the disclosure of appropriation). *Lebenswelt* (life-world) is included to emphasize the encompassing and integrated way in which we inhabit world, and 'act' has been replaced by 'interaction' to indicate the way in which we interact with the world and others.

The dynamics are important, and a number of different models attempted have been impossibly complicated, with arrows going in all directions, for it has to be recognised that there is a circularity to the process, as it feeds into the next making process, and as has been pointed out, 'automatism' (the repetition of a particular process over and over again), is one of the common varieties of process that can occur in both the child's and the adult artist's practice.



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- <sup>i</sup> Merleau-Ponty M., (1994) *Phenomenology of Perception*. trans. Colin Smith, London, New York: Routledge, xvii - xviii.
- <sup>ii</sup> Husserl E., (1983) *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, trans. F. Kersten, pp. 21-35, The Hague: Nijhoff, included in *The Phenomenology Reader* Moran D., and Mooney T., (eds), (2002) London & New York: Routledge. Moran's note 4, at the end of sections §90, §91 and §92 on 'Noesis and Noema' pp. 134 - 150.
- <sup>iii</sup> Husserl E., (1983) *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy* trans. F. Kersten, pp. 21-35 included in Moran D., and Mooney T., (eds) (2002) *The Phenomenology Reader*, p. 143.
- <sup>iv</sup> Husserl E., (1983) *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*. trans. F. Kersten, pp. 21-35, The Hague: Nijhoff, included in Moran D., and Mooney T., (eds) (2002) *The Phenomenology Reader* pp. 134 - 150.
- <sup>v</sup> Heidegger M., (1992) *History of the Concept of Time, Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kisiel. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. §6 p. 48.
- <sup>vi</sup> Vygotsky, L.S., *Mind in Society*, (1978) Harvard University Press, p. 109.
- <sup>vii</sup> Vygotsky, L.S., *Mind in Society*, (1978) p. 108.
- <sup>viii</sup> Vygotsky, L.S., *Mind in Society*, 1978. p. 109.
- <sup>ix</sup> Macaan C., (1993) 'Edmund Husserl' *Four Phenomenological Philosophers*, London: Routledge, p. 25.
- <sup>x</sup> Macaan C., (1993) 'Edmund Husserl' *Four Phenomenological Philosophers*, pp. 9 - 10.
- <sup>xi</sup> Macaan C., (1993) 'Edmund Husserl' *Four Phenomenological Philosophers* pp. 9 - 10.
- <sup>xii</sup> Macaan C., (1993) 'Edmund Husserl' *Four Phenomenological Philosophers* p. 16.
- <sup>xiii</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time* trans. John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson, Oxford UK: Blackwell, p. 188.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 190.
- <sup>xv</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 190.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 188.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, pp. 196-7.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, pp. 196-7.
- <sup>xix</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 33.
- <sup>xx</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 189.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 190.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 191.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 194.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 195.
- <sup>xxv</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 201.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, pp. 86-9 A footnote by Macquarrie & Robinson here points out Heidegger's conception of 'founded' as derived from Husserl.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time* p. 201.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Heidegger M., (1962) *Being and Time*, p. 200.
- <sup>xxix</sup> Heidegger M., (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', *Poetry, Language, Thought* trans. Hofstadter A., New York: Harper & Row, p. 46
- <sup>xxx</sup> Young J., and Haynes K., (2002) *Martin Heidegger, Off The Beaten Track*, Cambridge UK & New York: Cambridge University Press. p. 291.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> Betteridge. H.T (ed), (1968), *Cassell's German & English Dictionary* London: Cassell & Company Ltd.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Luquet G-H, (2001) *Children's Drawings (Le Dessin Enfantin)* trans. Costall, London, New York: Free Association Books, p. 153.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Merleau-Ponty M., (1994) *Phenomenology of Perception*. trans. Colin Smith, London, New York: Routledge xvii - xviii.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Macaan C., (1993) *Four Phenomenological Philosophers: Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty*, London & New York: Routledge, p. 52.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Macaan C., *Four Phenomenological Philosophers*, p. 53
- <sup>xxxvi</sup> Husserl, E., (1912) *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie. Zweites Buch. Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution* Ed. Marly Biemel. Husserliana 4. Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952; *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy. Second Book. Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*. Trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989, especially

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§§18a–b (60–70), §§36–42 (152–69), §§59–60a (266–77), et passim.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Elizabeth A. Behnke, [www.iep.utm.edu/husspembe/](http://www.iep.utm.edu/husspembe/)

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Macaan C., (1993) *Four Phenomenological Philosophers: Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty*, London & New York: Routledge, p.52.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Macaan C., (1993) *Four Phenomenological Philosophers*, p.164.

<sup>xl</sup> Levinas E., (1995) *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, p.19.

<sup>xli</sup> Guerlac S., (2007) 'The Useless Image: Bataille, Bergson, Magritte', *Representations* Vol 97, No 1, (Winter) pp.28 - 56. p.39

<sup>xlii</sup> Heidegger M., (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', *Poetry, Language, Thought* trans. Hofstadter A., New York: Harper & Row, pp.61-2.

<sup>xliii</sup> Heidegger M., (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art'. Immediately after this sentence Heidegger makes the point that 'this "letting" is nothing passive but a doing in the highest degree (cf. Wissenschaft und Besinnung" in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, p.49)' which in turn is followed by this note by Hofstadter:

'The reference is to a discussion of the German *Tun*, doing, which points to the core of its meaning as a laying forth, placing here, bringing here and bringing forth - "working," in the sense either of something bringing itself forth out of itself into presence or of man performing the bringing here and bringing forth of something. Both are a way in which something that is present presences.' p.82

<sup>xliv</sup> Heidegger M., (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', p. 19.

<sup>xliv</sup> Heidegger M. (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', p.24.

<sup>xlvi</sup> Heidegger M., (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', p.35.

<sup>xlvii</sup> Heidegger M. (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', p.36.

<sup>xlviii</sup> Young J., (2001) *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, UK & New York: Cambridge University Press p. 48.

<sup>xliv</sup> Young J., (2001) *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, p.50.

<sup>i</sup> Young J., (2001) *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, p.107.

<sup>li</sup> Young J., (2001) *Heidegger's Philosophy of Art*, p.106. The quotation is by Heidegger, (1977) *Martin Heidegger: Gesamtausgabe*, (ed.) F.-W. von Herrmann, Frankfurt-on-Maine: Klostermann,

<sup>lii</sup> Owens W.D., (1989) 'Heidegger's Philosophy of Art', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol.29, No.2, Spring, p.138

<sup>liii</sup> Heidegger M., (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', *Poetry, Language, Thought* trans. A. Hofstadter, New York: Harper & Row. The first sentences of the Epilogue are, 'The foregoing reflections are concerned with the riddle of art, the riddle that art itself is. They are far from claiming to solve the riddle. The task is to see the riddle'. 85. In Young and Haynes, the key part of the passage quoted is differently translated as: 'it belongs,' (art) 'rather, to the Event out of which the "meaning of being" (compare *Being and Time*) is first determined.' Young J., and Haynes K., (2002) *Martin Heidegger, Off The Beaten Track*, Cambridge UK & New York: Cambridge University Press p. 55

<sup>liv</sup> Owens W.D., (1989) 'Heidegger's Philosophy of Art', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol.29, No.2, Spring, p.132

<sup>lv</sup> Owens W.D., (1989) 'Heidegger's Philosophy of Art', p.130

<sup>lvi</sup> Betteridge H.T., (ed) (1968) *Cassell's German & English Dictionary* London: Cassel & Company Ltd.

<sup>lvii</sup> Owens W., (1989) 'Heidegger's Philosophy of Art' in *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol.29, No.2, Spring, pp.128-139.

<sup>lviii</sup> Heidegger M., (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', *Poetry, Language, Thought* trans. Hofstadter A., New York: Harper & Row, p.62.

<sup>lix</sup> Owens W., (1989) 'Heidegger's Philosophy of Art' in *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol.29, No.2, Spring, p.131.

<sup>lx</sup> Rawson P., (1979) *Seeing through Drawing* London: BBC, p.23.

<sup>lxi</sup> Betteridge H.T., (ed) (1968) *Cassell's German & English Dictionary*, London: Cassel & Company Ltd.

<sup>lxii</sup> Richter G., (1991) *Gerhard Richter*, London: Tate Gallery, pp 123-4.

## CONCLUSION

*Summary of Findings*

*Originality of Results*

*Relation between child and adult artist*

*Limitations and New Directions*

'kenning' = *noun* - a metaphorical compound word or phrase used *esp* in Old English or Old Norse poetry e.g. *swan-road* for *ocean* (Old Norse *kenning* from *kenna* to perceive).<sup>i</sup>

Richard Wollheim argued that if painting presupposes a universal human nature, then "it must be absurd to bring to the understanding of art a conception of human nature less rich than what is required elsewhere." And he nails this thought down with the profound observation that "many art historians, in their scholarly work, make do with a psychology that, if they tried to live their lives by it, would leave them at the end of an ordinary day without lovers, friends, or any insight into how this came about."<sup>ii</sup>

## *Introduction*

As I stated at the outset, this study has been a continuation of one begun some time ago,<sup>iii</sup> through a much closer examination of the philosophical context and content of George-Henri Luquet's *Le Dessin Enfantin*, upon which it was based. I had already referenced the work of Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger in the Masters thesis. These further researches, into the work of Bergson, Husserl and Heidegger, have given me a deeper insight into the philosophical context in which Luquet was writing, and a fuller understanding of the nature of perception, which lies at the heart of this enquiry.

I sought to build on that work to construct a more accurate model of process in relation to contemporary practice, and for the first time, to include my reflections on, and my experimentation with process in my own practice. I have known ever since completion of the Masters that the study required a deeper level of questioning than was possible at that time, and the provision of a wider context. In the process of that questioning I came to realize that the area that was most assumed, (and not just by myself) the 'intention', was the most complex, and the least understood. How the infant acquires what can be called an intention, and in what way it is identified, is not straightforward. The ability to recognize and identify meaning in graphic or cut forms (*Skeleton*) is evident in the child of three years, but the exploration of the mark and the trace, and the recognition of the relation between a form and its representation has clearly started long before that.

The capacity of the child for what Luquet called 'circumspection' is another such area, and I examined in the last Chapter the relation between his and Heidegger's use of the term. For Luquet it meant the ability of the child to hypothesize and test things out in the acquisition of practical knowledge. In Heidegger it is that primordial interpretation that lies in our seeing something *as* something before we make any assertion about it.

As I stated at the beginning, the principle behind the thesis was that by examining the process that gets started as a consequence of seeing something 'as' something, and wanting to 'make something out of it' we may discover something about the way children see things in the first place. It was also to present evidence of the child's range of symbolic activity beyond, yet also including, that studied by Luquet and the majority of studies of children's art, through examining their use of found objects and a wide range of materials. This included: the interrelation between the materials of making, the process, and the maker (whether child or adult); the symbolic potential that resides in their interaction; and its relation to the life of the child. Of fundamental importance was that the process occurred spontaneously without any request or requirement being placed upon the child or the nature of what they chose to do. Only under such conditions could an accurate and full account of the process, and its relation to the life of the child, become possible.

## 1. *Summary of Findings*

### 1.1. *What Phenomenology has brought to the enquiry*

The enquiry came to centre on how intuition is given to consciousness:

'the key structures of intentionality, the relation between noesis and noema, the possible layers and enfolded-ness of memory and perception, and particularly the identification of two areas in particular: 'categorical intuition' and 'operative intentionality', these I believe are essential to understanding the nature of seeing-as, and its relation to the creative process.' The question that unites both sets of enquiries, into what the children made, and my own work, revolves around *that moment of intuition, of attention held*.<sup>1</sup>

The explication of Husserl's theory by Levinas in *The Theory of Intuition in Husserl's Phenomenology* was a key text in both understanding Husserl, and discovering Levinas. The passage above, like a leitmotif, I have carried through the last two chapters, for it defines the areas from Phenomenology that I identified as being of key importance which are:

#### i) *Attention, Intuition and Intentionality*

I pointed out that the child's attention, which Luquet refers to as an attention towards particular things in relation to the beginnings of an intention to draw something, has started a long time before that. From early infancy the child is attentive to the world and the people around her, and I sought to emphasize that *attention* in the Husserlian sense as a directedness of consciousness is *intentional*, in that it is always *of something or towards something*.<sup>2</sup> I referred to the essential connection Husserl makes between attention and

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter 4 p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 1 p.33.

intentionality: the noetic-noematic relation, that 'attention of every sort is nothing less than a fundamental species of *intentionive* modifications', and that changes occur in the process of looking that bring about different interpretations of the same object: these are as Husserl put it, 'fluid, changing correlations'.<sup>iv</sup>

Also, of fundamental importance to the thesis, is that as Merleau-Ponty makes clear in his Preface to *Phenomenology of Perception*:

What distinguishes (Husserl's) intentionality from the Kantian relation to a possible object is that the unity of the world, before being posited by knowledge in a specific act of identification, is 'lived' as ready-made or already there.<sup>v</sup>

### ii) *Operative Intentionality*

Husserl's thesis that underlying all our understanding of, and ability to be in the world, there is a pre-cognitive *embodied* realm of being, which provides us with what Merleau-Ponty terms *Praktognosia*, an original and primary access and way of being in and engaging in the world which is composed of three elements: the innate structures and capacities of the body; our interactions with others and the world from the earliest moments of life; and cultural awareness.

'In place of a Cartesian 'I think', we now find an "I do" (Crisis p.161) or as Merleau-Ponty will call it, a *practical cogito*'.<sup>vi</sup> As I remarked in Chapter 4, reflection occurs not through mental activity alone, but also engagement in expression through material, whether through drawing, making, playing, performance, writing or utterance, and such engagement is embodied. Indeed, as I pointed out, it is often not until the physical act of writing, or making commences, that the thought becomes evident, or reveals itself. There is so to speak, the necessity for one to open up to *oneself*, in order to discover form as it comes into being.

### iii) *Categorical Intuition*

This form of intuition I identified as essential to an understanding of 'seeing-as'. In the intuition of an 'instance of red' there is intuited the 'essence of red', as well as the 'categorical' intuition of 'red', which in the example given in Chapter 2, enabled J (at the age of seven years) to make a connection between two reds based on the octave in music. This requires a transposition between 'domains', in which a relation is understood as applicable across domains. This form of the child's intuition I identified as 'categorical'.<sup>3</sup> It is this form of intuition, I argue, that enables that facility of children, which Luquet identified as a striking characteristic of children and which he termed *mobilité d'esprit*, to transfer intuitions across categories, or apply categories to them that are not commonly applied. It is an essential component in the making of meaning, but also, of fundamental

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<sup>3</sup> see Chapter 2, *Ground and Context*.

importance in the creative process.

For it is not A and B or A or B itself which has to be explained but the 'being-together' of A and B or the 'one of the two' of A and B. For all that, supersensible, or categorial, intuition is still founded on sensible intuition even though it engenders objects of a different order altogether. The founded acts upon which categorial intuition is based could not exist without the founding acts of sensible intuition. <sup>vii</sup>

#### iv) *Umsicht'/Circumspection*

It was essential to clarify the different meanings and application of the term 'circumspection', by Heidegger in *Being and Time* as translated by Macquarrie and Robinson, and in Luquet's *Le Dessin Enfantin*. For Luquet it meant a form of hypothesizing, an experimental relation to things which would sometimes be wide of the mark, and at others would be apt, but most importantly it is hypothesizing in the practical realm.

But hypothesis is an indispensable resource for both speculation and practical knowledge as long as its flights of fancy are subjected to correction through extended contact with reality. Otherwise if the mind does not acquire *circumspection*, it remains inactive and incapable of progress. <sup>viii</sup>

Luquet does not (frustratingly) elaborate, or lay out clearly what he means by the term, but it is clearly different from that in Heidegger where it means a special kind of sight, and a way of going about using things that we are familiar with, in relation to 'equipment' and 'tools'. In the last chapter I explored this in some detail, and the etymological roots of the terms, *das Zeugsein* and *Zeug* as used in German, and their translation into English. What this revealed was a broader conception of the terms, from 'equipmental being' and 'equipment', to 'stuff' or simply 'things'. This meant that the term in the original German allowed for a more open application than that of 'equipment' or some purely utilitarian task. However when Heidegger uses the term 'circumspective interpretation' he also applies it to a way of seeing that takes things for granted, that is an 'everyday' kind of seeing. It is neither hypothesizing nor experimental. It is only when we make an interpretation in the form of an assertion that a different way of seeing is brought to things in and of the world.

#### v) *Auslegung/ Interpretation*

This in turn brought my attention to the fundamental role of interpretation, when a movement occurs through 'assertion' from the primordial "existential-hermeneutical" 'as' of circumspection, to the "apophantical" 'as': how the 'properties' of a thing are made evident and are given a particular character, or brought to the attention in a particular way. It was through a form of presentation (giving) that the ('present-at-hand') properties or qualities of the objects found by J at the age of three, became seen, and realised anew: the wooden



bridge placed on a postcard of the Ravenglass to Eskdale Railway became linked categorially (railways often require bridges - it makes sense to bring them together), and historically, (in our shared history). That which had before been seen as 'ready-to-hand', known in a certain way, taken for granted and largely ignored, became seen in a very different way. It is by means of surprising combinations through *mobilité d'esprit*, whether by the child or the adult artist in re-configuring the categorial, that we are shown ways of seeing things afresh. In a sense it could be said that in the artwork, the "existential-hermeneutical" 'as', is laid bare by the "apophantical" 'as': it is revealed, disclosed. It is here that imagination is active, in the ability to transfer between categories and domains, and in the conjunction of objects that do not usually belong together. This is much closer to the meaning that Luquet gave to *circumspection*: 'flights of fancy', testing, experimentation, hypothesis, and speculation.

#### vi) *Ereignis and Appropriation*

How is it that suddenly, in a moment, something is seen differently, seen 'as' something else, or with the possibility of becoming something else?

Art is considered neither an area of cultural achievement nor an appearance of spirit; it belongs to the *disclosure of appropriation* [*Ereignis*] by way of which the "meaning of Being"(cf. *Being and Time*) can alone be defined.<sup>ix</sup>

In examining what Heidegger means by *Ereignis*, it was found to include 'waiting', but an *active* waiting, not so much waiting *for*, but waiting *on*. For this to happen, there needs to be a readiness, and attentiveness: a being open to the possibilities that present themselves. It is perhaps not always necessarily as 'transport' and 'enchantment' that this occurs, but also as a 'what if?' In this respect there is a close affinity I would claim, between Heidegger's meaning and the manner in which the children came across the things that became appropriated. Another way of putting what occurred in those cases might be that the child was 'appropriated' by that which they saw in the thing, and which then brought about the act of removal, addition, or 'housing' (*The Matisse Letter*). In a similar way, it could be said that I was 'appropriated' by the light through the transparent, billowing plastic on Hungerford Bridge, (the *Grace and Danger Series*) and the brilliant seam of light on the sea, on the horizon at St.Pair. It is also reminiscent of Luquet's observation of the way things around the child 'proposed' an idea, which I commented was an appropriate and accurate way of putting what happens often in the case of the adult artist.<sup>4</sup>

As Hofstadter points out:

But instead of "appropriate" in the sense of one's appropriating something for oneself, for

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<sup>4</sup> see Chapter 1, p.36.

which the verb *sich (etwas) aneignen* is already available, Heidegger wants to speak of a process by which nothing "selfish" occurs, but rather by which the different members of the world are brought into belonging to and with one another and are helped to realize themselves and each other in realizing this belonging.<sup>x</sup>

The appropriation of objects from one domain to another I found to be one of the most fascinating forms or 'strategies' of process, and became the strategy I explored in my own practice (the 'Gesso-ed Objects', and 'Plot 74'). The 'ready-made' already has a 'world' in which it is situated and it is possible for this 'world' to be transferred with the object into the new domain, but with a changed aspect, with other meanings attached.

The paper I wrote about the visit to Pistoia explores this with reference to the 'Arte Povera' movement. In my revision of process at the beginning of Chapter 2, I made the point that in a sense, the appropriation of sets of objects ('Primitive art', and the art of children), materials (Arte Povera), space (Land Art), or also it could be claimed, states of consciousness or mind (the 'unconscious', the 'irrational'), is what has defined the 'avant-gardes' in Fine Art through the 19th the 20th Centuries. These all involved acts of appropriation, albeit bearing a different meaning to *appropriation* in Heidegger, but not so far removed from his in the sense that these appropriations communicate the artists' intuitions about the nature of contemporary life; revealing the way life is 'truly' being lived and ways in which the nature of Being is 'uncovered'.

It is not that other meaning of 'appropriation', which is to steal, or take over the property or the achievements of another. It is on the contrary we who are taken over, we who are 'opened up' by the disclosure that presents itself to us.

The other findings are as follows:

### 1.2 *Model of Process*

Luquet's thesis provided the first account of the way in which drawings happen, and the process that is entered into: how the child gets started, and then how they continue, and what can happen along the way. He provides a great deal that is still of importance and relevance to an understanding of what is involved in the process, and because of his work remaining un-translated into English until 2001, is still neither fully recognised or understood. Piaget's interpretation of his work created the notion it was a stage theory of development, and Merleau-Ponty (based also perhaps on Piaget's reading) criticized his work mistakenly for considering the child's drawing 'to be an abortive adult drawing and the development of the child, viewed through the stages of his drawing',... 'as a series of frustrations of the attempt to represent the world as the adult does'.<sup>xi</sup>

On the contrary Luquet asserted the validity of the child's re-presentation of the world,

and articulated what the child is achieving in the constructs of 'Intellectual Realism', in 'forging their mental structure'. The elements he identified however, were limited by the narrow constraints he put upon the nature of the objects of representation and the range of materials and media he observed children use. Furthermore, it is surprising that no mention is made by him of the alternative constructs of space and form, occurring in Paris contemporaneously, in the works of the Cubists, and earlier, in the work of the artist who so influenced them, Cézanne. It is also important to note that the role of affective interrelations with others is barely mentioned as such, despite his copious descriptions of family situations and contexts in which the process takes place.

For this reason it was necessary to expand Luquet's model of process through an examination of those elements that enter into the process that were limited by his conception of them: *objects of representation; gesture and drawing*. Other elements were introduced that were not considered by him at all: *ground and context; communication; materials and methods; games, transgression and the other; and finally strategies and performance*. In order for these to be articulated it was necessary to include case studies, which included the child's relations with others and the world, their *Lebenswelt*, both as it occurred at the time and historically. I hope I have made it clear that the inclusion of this material, which as Matthews has pointed out is often seen as irrelevant, is on the contrary essential to an understanding of what the process is about, and how the child becomes engaged in it.

In considering the *objects of representation*, and *gesture and drawing* other forms of symbolic representation and interaction were discussed: the gesture which describes a 'state of affairs', the rotation of a mower, the clapping in the song. In 'Materials and Methods' I emphasized the child's exploration and awareness of the qualities and properties of materials, and the inseparability of the nature of their interaction with them, from the process.

As I pointed out in the Summary of Chapter 2 the possibility that the child's relation to the process is one that includes affect, is not explored by Luquet. He did not consider as I do in the case studies, or propose the possibility that the child may be communicating something to another that cannot be spoken, not only because the child doesn't have the words, but for other reasons that the child has a sense of but cannot articulate. I referred to the work of Melanie Klein and Donald Winnicott in their examination of the way in which external objects are invested with meaning from infancy onwards.<sup>5</sup> The 'found object' offers the child the possibility of using those things that the object is capable of denoting,

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<sup>5</sup> see Chapter 2, pages 81 - 83.

and relieves them of the burden of having to construct an image or form, for themselves.

Indeed I hope it has become evident through these examples, that the idea of their being an 'intention' beforehand, that is then simply carried out, is very far from the reality of what is happening here. What is evident is an interaction in which it could be said that as Luquet said, the objects 'propose' or materials 'show' the child what they might do, and their response is one which is sympathetic, or compatible, or teasing, or combative, and which enters understandingly into that which is offered.<sup>6</sup>

In 'Strategies and Performance' I pointed out that a wider set of actions that accompany the process of making, have to be taken into account, *as part of the process itself*.

### 1.3 Pedagogical Implications for Early Years and Primary Education

The project supported by Creative Partnerships and Staffordshire University, *What If: How Children See and What Children Make of Things* provided me with evidence that came out of an entirely different context to the one in which mine had started, and which prior to starting it, I had considerable doubts about. The principle I had held on to was that what children make of things had to be spontaneous; there had to be no implication or hint of a requirement placed upon them. I had previously rejected any notion of working within any formal education setting. As it happened, I found a teacher who had an instantaneous understanding of what the project was about, and all the material included in the thesis and in the appendices came from the children for whom she was responsible. I had not expected to find it carried out in a way that, it could be claimed, allowed the children to respond spontaneously to the materials and objects they were provided with.

The article published in *Teaching Thinking*, 'Art Without Prescription',<sup>7</sup> which presented the material from the Creative Partnerships project, identifies issues of great concern with regards to the position and pedagogy of the arts in schools, and this is an area where I would like to contribute a great deal more.<sup>8</sup>

Close examination of the teaching activities as laid out in each of the Units for example at Key Stages 1–2 shows that they are entirely dominated by language. The first stage, *Developing Ideas* is presented as occurring entirely through verbal or written communication. The second part, *Investigating and Making*, which is conducted through a highly prescriptive series of activities is then followed by *Evaluating and Developing Work* which is also conducted through verbal and written communication. *Display* is included as

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<sup>6</sup> Chapter 2, pp. 138-9

<sup>7</sup> 'Art Without Prescription': article published in *Teaching Thinking & Creativity* Vol.8:3, developed from Creative Partnerships Report.

<sup>8</sup> see *Too Much, Too Soon? Early Learning and the Erosion of Childhood*, Edited by Richard House, Stroud: Hawthorn Press 2011.

a 'point to note' but not as an outcome. This structure and emphasis on spoken and written language reveals not only assumptions about the way that art happens, but also about the nature of learning in *art and design*. The importance of literacy in the development and understanding of ideas is considerable, and children should be encouraged to talk about what they are doing with one another and their teacher, but the emphasis on it at key stages 1 and 2 appears to outweigh the learning that can occur through the exploration of materials and processes. 'Visual, tactile and sensory experiences' are essential to that learning. By dividing subjects up and then allocating them differing priorities, the national curriculum creates artificial boundaries and complex burdensome structures, which act as barriers to learning and thinking.<sup>xii</sup>

#### 1.4 *The Results of Reflection on, and Experimentation in my own Practice*

In terms of my own practice, this opportunity to reflect on work retrospectively (and the time over which these researches have taken place has been considerable) has brought the realization that my practice, my observations of the children, and my teaching are all united by certain principles. The principles upon which I based my observations of my daughters<sup>9</sup> were carried through as far as was possible into the Creative Partnerships project.<sup>10</sup>

In my teaching in Higher Education the pedagogy that has underpinned it, has been highly structured yet non-prescriptive, experimental, and strongly materials based. In my own practice I have emphasized the importance of working in ways that are structured through serial working processes, which link closely to 'automatism', combined with chance operations, or open situations in which I have to respond in the 'here and now'. In all three of these areas, these principles create situations that are risky, and it cannot be otherwise if anything is to happen which is 'owned' by the child or student, rather than by the parent or teacher. With my own practice, the 'releasement' or 'letting go' of *Gelassenheit* is not one that has to do with any 'Romantic' notion of self-expression, but quite the reverse: it is to do with being with the moment, and the process, in a way which allows that which can happen, to happen. It is letting go of one's control in order for things to show themselves. They show themselves in ways you cannot determine, and must not determine in advance. I had thought of my fine art practice as being very divided up into different areas, but I have found through the course of this study and experimentation the many links between them: the repeated emphasis on line, boundaries and edges; the importance of texture, and the qualities of materials; imprint, emboss, incision; coating (gesso) and layering (painting); the use of monochromatic or limited colour; and colour relations that *produce* colour in the form of a *live experience in the process of looking* (the after-image); the

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<sup>9</sup> see Chapter 2, p.80.

<sup>10</sup> see Chapter 2, p.136.

importance of illusion and ambiguity.

In the case of the paintings the implication of a possible imaginary space or beyond, became evident through the process of looking at the way the colours, lines, and areas are operating within the virtual space set up by the colour field. It was not immediately evident at the time, or in those sustained moments of making the studies, but only realised later in the assessment of how the space was operating in finished works developed in the studio. The 'ground' can in certain of the works be read as a continuous plane, or as two areas which meet at the 'horizon' where the line, or lines which make it up, can be seen as a brilliant or intense area placed 'upon' it, or 'in' it, or can be an *opening* into another space, into an 'open', or perhaps a 'nothing'. In this respect it relates directly to earlier work in which the continuity of the plane is disrupted to reveal another plane or space beneath, or beyond, from another or future time, or from another place. It can sometimes be so intense in colour that it floats out in front of the virtual plane that has been set up by the painting. Yet it is both at the same time: it is possible in a moment for the space within to fold out and float in the virtual space between the viewer and the work, to come forward from beyond. This too is what occurs with the after-image, a phenomenon that is integral to the *Horizon Series*, and occurred fleetingly (and may return), in the three-dimensional work and is a key element in the paintings.

The most rewarding aspect of the experimental work in process has been the surprise of those 'events' which have occurred like in the moment above, which then become like Bruner commented, so 'obvious': the way in which movement entered into the work whilst documenting the series *Parcels*, *Gold Cuts*, and *Horizon*; moving the wire around between the objects for *Plot 74* and finding each piece of wire had a different (character-full) movement; or through an accident, as with the bell-like ringing of the tiny metal washer on the rusty latch during the setting up of the work, which when moved a fraction I could never achieve again, but which opened up the possibility of sound.

## 2. *Originality of Results*

i) By situating what children do in a larger context, in the world and the culture they inhabit, I hope to have demonstrated how the making process cannot be separated from the life of the child and often includes a larger set of actions, which go beyond the act or acts of making. Whilst this in itself is not original, (Matthews 1999) there are very few studies of this kind, and none to my knowledge, that include the child's work with found objects. It includes therefore, a body of evidence that is much more wide-ranging than is usually considered necessary to the study of children's art. I was able to witness a great deal of the process, often all of it, as it occurred in their daily lives. As a consequence, it

was possible for the interpretation of the evidence to be informed by it: their history was also, in part, my history. It is also, in this respect, a new interpretation of Luquet that is distinct from those set within the tradition of psychology.

ii) Because of my knowledge and experience of Fine Art, particularly as a practitioner, I saw the things the children made, and the manner in which they made them, in a way that was very different to that of an experimental psychologist. I collected things they made that would not 'normally' be collected, or directly studied. They were to some observers just 'rubbish'. The expressive potential of the mark, relations between colours, the relation between the drawing or piece and the material out of which it is made, all such elements are rarely if ever included in such studies. In addition they were given permission to work on and with things that might in some households have been proscribed, and would not usually be included in the test situations used in Psychology.

iii) The children's work was spontaneous, initiated by the child, including that evidence gained through the Creative Partnerships project.

iv) The importance of 'appropriation' as a form of symbolic visual play: what children make when they bring found objects or images together are not arbitrary conjunctions, and should be included as part of any study of children's art.

v) The observation that children can be aware of the 'ground' in the formal sense, as in the way in which a drawing may fit with the form of the paper or object, and in the sense of a 'sphere' or 'domain' of objects as in '*gegenstandlichkeit*'.<sup>11</sup> In this respect it is a form of categorial intuition, but one that occurs through the situating of the image or object in a specific context, and which is again exemplified in the case-studies *Parcels* and *The Matisse-letter*.

vi) I observed that children are aware of, and can have a high degree of sensitivity to the qualities, shape and form of materials, what can be done with them, and what they signify. The Creative Partnerships project supported these observations ('rainbow').

vii) Further unexpected findings from the Creative Partnerships project were that children will spontaneously form into groups of varying sizes, in order to achieve a goal, or gain necessary assistance; they will make reparation through assisting and building a work together with others; they communicate feelings towards others through illustrated letters; they show evidence of skills the teacher was hitherto unaware of; they display harmonious relations with others throughout the activity; they maintain sustained

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<sup>11</sup> see Chapter 2, pp. 102-4.



interest.<sup>12</sup>

viii) The connection I have made between 'exemplification' and *Auslegung*: the way in which the properties or qualities of things are presented in the artwork, and through which, in their being brought together, are able to convey a *Sachverhalte* or 'state of affairs'. Also the presentational form of making an assertion, the 'apophantical 'as' of the artwork, and the way it brings us to see the qualities or properties of things afresh through re-contextualising the 'present-at-hand'. Both of these may not be original observations. However it may be that originality lies in the application of these connections to the art of the child and adult artists' practice.

ix) I consider I am able to claim originality in my own practice. Whilst acknowledging that there are clear precedents for both the *Horizon Series* and *Plot 74* in 20th Century Art, they are all nevertheless unique works in which the elements operate in an original way.

## 2. *Relation between child and adult artist*

### 2.1 *Similarities*

i) In his 'Conclusions Pedagogiques' (§93)<sup>xiii</sup> Luquet points out that many of the characteristics of 'intellectual realism' are to be found in the skilled drawings of draughtsmen, cartographers, architects and designers, who all make use of transparency, 'rabattement' (the plan) and mixed viewpoints (side elevation + plan). The aim of education should *not* be to 'hasten advancement to the fourth stage' (visual realism) often so clearly evident in the dominance of prescriptive methods in the visual arts in nursery and primary education.<sup>13</sup> Those 'characteristics' are to be found equally in contemporary Fine Art practice as part of a range of approaches to the depiction of space and form that have become increasingly varied, some of which have been directly 'appropriated' by artists from the work of children. In examining the nature of the 'objects of representation' in Chapter 2, I referred to the observations by Matthews of how in the early years the child is able to encode 'multiple aspects, or even 'proto-views' of the object or event'.<sup>xiv</sup> It is these 'multiple aspects' that represent, or *exemplify* other types of experience than the visual that I considered in the work of Lanyon: the experience of balancing on the edge of a cliff, the combination of viewpoints, the effects of the wind.

ii) I suggested at the end of Chapter 1, Luquet's observation that the things around the child in their life, their family and environment 'propose' an idea to the child, could be

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<sup>12</sup> see Chapter 2, pp. 122-9.

<sup>13</sup> see Appendix: 'Art Without Prescription': article published in *Teaching Thinking & Creativity* Vol.8:3.

applied equally to the adult artist. An idea is 'suggested' or 'proposed' by things seen out walking, or in the case of *The Matisse Letter* when entering a room and finding an already cut out image. Another way of putting this I have suggested above is that in such a case, in this form of intuition, there is the occurrence of *Ereignis*, an 'event of appropriation'. However it is impossible not to recognise that there is also the occurrence of that which we have not wanted to see, or have repressed from our consciousness, because either it is painful, or 'not allowed'. The realisation that I had become 'homeless', in the sense of no longer being able to be in the place that I knew and loved, became the meaning that unfolded from the work developed from the intuition of the scrap of plastic on Hungerford Bridge. Equally it is important to recognise that the letter sent to her father by R under the bathroom door had connotations that she herself knew were 'rude', transgressive, and teasing.

iii) What Luquet identified as 'predilection', that which has taken '*an exclusive or preponderant position*' in the child's mind, can equally be identified in the adult artist.<sup>xv</sup>

This preoccupation with a particular kind of thing is a form of readiness: a form of preparedness to be on the look out, even whilst not realising it, waiting for the moment. Indeed one of the most significant aspects of an artist's oeuvre, is that a particular subject matter becomes dominant, or a particular kind of process, or both combined within a particular genre, or group of genres; or it may in contemporary practice, range across media and genres, but carry within it a constant theme, or set of themes. It is both interesting and perplexing that those who claim to be familiar with Luquet's work rarely if ever refer to this particularly significant observation.

iv) The ability to see the quality or property of one thing in *something else* in which it is not commonly seen, (in the sense of 'ready-to-hand'), and the recognition of qualities or properties that are held in common between different categories, what Luquet described as characteristic of children, *mobilité d'esprit*, is I suggest a propensity that can be recognised in the adult artist who makes an original contribution. It involves the bringing together of elements not usually associated with one another; the application of a process to something not usually applied to it; a common texture given to certain parts of a work and not others.

## 2.2 Differences

i) Forms and depth of knowledge are inherent in the '*Vor*' structure that is brought to interpretation. This will inevitably be wider and at a more profound level in the adult artist than in the child. The adult will have acquired a range of skills, and developed processes that are beyond the capabilities of the child, as well as a range of experience from which to draw. This cannot help but enable the adult artist to construct a *Gestalt*,

that arises out of conflicts the child has yet to experience, at least at the level they are able to reflect upon them. The 'state of affairs' is therefore of a different order, and at a more profound level in relation to the experience they have. The *Parcels* can be interpreted in a way that brings a profound meaning to them, *by the adult*, through their knowledge of the history of the child. However, the meaning of an adult work cannot entirely depend upon an interpretation based on the artist's history: it has to stand independently, and the artist's own interpretation cannot be counted on. This is where the work of the viewer, 'preserver', or co-creator enters into the being of the work.

ii) The burden of habit, *Seinsvergessenheit*, (forgetfulness of (the depth of) Being) the demands of convention, and economic and social restraint is far greater in the adult. Entrenched ways of going about and thinking about things are more likely, and established. For the child between the ages of two and four, their sense of security depends upon the repetition of known procedures and patterns of ways of life in the world they inhabit, and anyone who has spent time with a child will have witnessed the intense distress that ensues when a different path is taken, or a meal is differently composed to that expected. However, 'things' are not taken for granted by the child in the same way that they are by the adult: they are still a mystery, whilst the adult dwells in a circle of things that are familiar, reliable, ordinary. Thus, for the adult artist, the importance of *Gelassenheit*, 'letting go', and 'letting be', is all the greater, and it is not easy, as this part of the earlier quotation from Gerhard Richter shows:

Accepting this is often intolerable and also impossible, because as a thinking, planning human being it humiliates me to find that I am powerless to that extent, making me doubt my competence and any constructive ability. The only consolation is that I can tell myself that despite all this I *made* the pictures, even when they take the law into their own hands, do what they like with me although I don't want them to, and simply come into being somehow. <sup>xvi</sup>

For the meaning to unfold, the artist has to trust that there is something happening with the material when it is 'let go' in this way that will emerge, and will make sense. In the Introduction to *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, W.H. Gass writes about the nature of the process Rilke engaged in during the writing of it, the risks, and work it required:

No. Rilke is not Malte. Yet Malte *is* Rilke. Just as matter and mind, for Spinoza, were essential but separate aspects of one whole, so Malte is an aspect of Rilke- Rilke seen with one "I". And Malte, when he describes the remaining interior wall of a demolished house (to choose a celebrated example), is penetrating more fully into things than Rilke or Rodin or any of us would, if we were merely walking by on some Parisian sidewalk, because this vision, like so many others, is an observation taken home, and taken to heart, and held warmly there until it

risers like bread. Anyone can stand still and take notes. Quite a different eye or recording hand *constructs one thing out of its response to another*.....One probably cannot say it too often: writing is, among other things, an activity which discovers its object; which surprises itself with the meanings it runs into, and passes sometimes with apologies, or recognizes with a start like an old friend encountered in a strange place. <sup>xvii</sup>

This sustained persistence and pursuit is not found in the child to the degree that is being referred to here. There is persistence, in the sense of a repeated engagement with a subject or process (J in *The Office*) which can become obsessive, as can predilection, but the child will either give up if they cannot achieve what they want, or will turn the work into another kind of thing, as Luquet describes in 'fortuitous realism' (this however *does* occur in the case of the adult artists also).

iii) The bringing together of conflict, *synthesis* (*Gestalt, Stellen & Ge-stell*).

In the last chapter I wrote the following:

In the section in Chapter 2 on 'Ground and Context' I drew attention to the way in which children have an acute awareness of the 'ground' in which an object is situated, and in which they situate an object, or drawing. <sup>14</sup> The placing, or setting up that Heidegger means by *Stellen* and *Ge-stell* is much more complex, but is in my view related to this fundamental situating of a form (*Gestalt*). It will be important to return to this element in the Conclusion when examining the relation between the creative process of the child and the adult artist. <sup>15</sup>

The conflict that is set into place by the *Gestalt* is the bringing together of things which are in opposition, or set apart, not in the sense of a rigid fixing but in a way in which *their createdness is made evident*: 'in contrast to all other modes of production, the work is distinguished by being created so that its createdness is part of the created work.' <sup>xviii</sup>

In this respect, whilst the 'setting up' of the artwork by the adult can be a highly complex undertaking, there are ways in which the work of the child will present its 'createdness' to the viewer: through its directness, and simplicity of execution; its vitality of mark and line; its rawness and boldness; its surprising combination of elements; and through the child's ability often to capture the character, the 'particularité' (as Luquet would put it) of a thing or a person.

It was this aspect of children's painting and drawing that so captivated the artists mentioned in the Introduction to the thesis, and in Chapter 2. Miró, as was mentioned in Chapter 2, adopted a working process that involved referring directly to Luquet's account of the ways in

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<sup>14</sup> p. 101.  
<sup>15</sup> p.244.

which children develop their drawings through the phase of intellectual realism.<sup>16</sup> In Christopher Green's fascinating essay that was referred to in that chapter, 'Magicians, Picasso the sorcerer, Miró the monstrous child' it was not formal characteristics alone that Miro was attempting to return to, but the child 'during the first infantile years of intense sexual experience when the Oedipal dilemma, in the Freudian paradigm, makes its earliest impact; the period to which the neurotic and the artist, as makers of magic correspondences, inexorably find their way back.'<sup>xix</sup> It was to become 'the maker of magic correspondences'.

Paul Klee's incorporation, or re-appropriation, of himself, through his direct referencing of his own drawings from childhood is an exceptional and fascinating case in which this early work transformed his fundamental process. It was conducted as a collection, as well as experimentation with the ways of drawing, and techniques of making, which included finger painting, sgraffito (scratching through a top layer to another colour underneath), inconsistency of scale, or dominance given to those parts of a drawing that are the most important, and the transformation of one subject into another in the process of making the drawing (included by Luquet under 'Interpretation'). Beginning in 1906, it continued up until his death in 1940, culminating in the work of his last years.<sup>xx</sup>

Klee and Miró are examples however of an attempt to return to the symbolism, syntax and iconography of child art, whether from their own childhood, their children's or others. As Fineberg points out in his final essay, 'Mainstreaming Childhood', artists from the 1950s drew upon their childhood in different ways, in the recollection of their early memories of place, scale, feeling, the ideas and questions of childhood, 'as a reservoir of originating content.'<sup>xxi</sup> Barnett Newman, Mark Rothko (who taught art to children at the Brooklyn Jewish Center, 1929 - 1952, and who included a selection of their work in his first solo exhibition in 1933), and Joseph Beuys, are some of the artists Fineberg includes in this final essay, whose work was influenced at a fundamental, conceptual level by childhood, or by their work with children. Jean-Michel Basquiat evidently collaborated with children in the making of certain of his works, (see *Untitled*, Fig.9.20, in collaboration with Cora Bischolberger, aged 4-5).<sup>xxii</sup>

In Chapter 2, I drew attention to the child's awareness of the qualities and properties of a medium or material. Their ability to shape and handle a wide range of materials is clearly limited, but an acute attention to the qualities of the medium, whether in poetry, music, painting or photography, is one of the ways in which a work's createdness can be made evident, whether it is in denial of those properties (as in the Gothic Cathedral), or whether it

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<sup>16</sup> Chapter 2, p.58.

is through a surrender to them (Richter).<sup>17</sup> The surprising things that children do with materials, and the way they construct with them,<sup>18</sup> or discover form in them (*Skeleton*) can trigger the realisation of the fundamental ways in which form is perceived. They can return us to those earliest forms of experience in which 'the unity of the world is lived' through a unity of the senses, before they have become separated out and a hierarchy has become imposed upon them.<sup>19</sup>

However the nature of the conflict, and the meaning, or 'state of affairs' that emerges through the process of making the work, will be of a different order in the adult's creative process to that of the child. Clearly, Titian's *The Flaying of Marsyas*, (1570-76) or Cornelia Parker's *Mass (Colder Darker Matter)*, (1997), could never have been made by a child, as neither could the works by Vermeer, or Van Gogh, alluded to in Chapter 4.

iv) Adult artists, if at all serious, take up a position in relation to the context and history of the subject. They are aware of, knowledgeable about, and may well be on close terms with some of their contemporaries, and in direct opposition to others. They are usually at one level or another, whether publicly or privately, whether through spoken or written language, or through the work itself, engaged in a dialectic, a dialogue with their fellow artists as well as with the viewer, or as Heidegger would put it, the 'co-creator' or 'preserver' of their work. Whilst the child is often, as I have pointed out in many of the case studies, engaged in an act which is either covertly, or overtly communicative, they are not consciously positioning themselves in relation to the historical and contemporary practice of Art. They are however, as Luquet observed so astutely, aware of the different 'requirements' to suit different recipients of their work, as between for example, the school teacher and their sister.

#### 4. *Limitations and New Directions*

4.1 One of the greatest difficulties in writing the thesis has been maintaining a necessary focus within the complex disciplines of phenomenology and fine art, and to achieve it with the depth it requires. The nature of the subject is one in which there are many overlapping fields, with essential information to bring to it within the chosen disciplines:

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<sup>17</sup> There is an irony in Richter's statement, in so far as he also has a parallel 'oeuvre' in which he demonstrates an exceptional level of skill and control.

<sup>18</sup> see the illustrations of David Smith's sculptures *Horse*, and *Becca* in Fineberg (1997) p.210.

<sup>19</sup> In the chapter on 'The Sense of an Emergent Self', in *The Interpersonal World of the Infant, A View from Psychoanalysis & Developmental Psychology*, Daniel Stern writes 'Infants appear to experience a world of perceptual unity, in which they can perceive amodal qualities in any modality from any form of human expressive behaviour, represent these qualities abstractly, and then transpose them to other modalities.....not sights and sounds and touches and nameable objects, but rather shapes, intensities, and temporal patterns - the more "global" qualities of experience.' U.S.A. Basic Books 1985, p.51.

as well as those beyond, such as psychoanalysis, being but one.

One direction for example would be the connection between Wollheim, Winnicott, and Merleau-Ponty, and the work of Melanie Klein. What is important about Winnicott is the attention he gave to that space between the me and the not-me, in which so much happens and upon which so much depends. This is the space he claims, where cultural experience is located. It is the space in which imaginative play is situated, where the nature of things, what they are and what they can imaginatively be, this doubling of the actual and the possible, are combined. This is an area where I have made what can only be called an 'indicatory gesture', but it is in this area, in these first years, that the phenomenology of the body, the 'pre-cognitive realm' is grounded.

The work of the thesis has driven me back even further to the first years, and the need for much more research into 'that space between the me and the not-me', and of the child's earliest inter-relations with the world. The work of Daniel L. Stern is particularly interesting in this respect.<sup>xxiii</sup>

4.2 The observations that form the basis of this enquiry were of my two daughters, and since having been able to observe closely the development through infancy over the last few years, of my grandson, I have been made aware of factors that would have been beyond the scope of this enquiry. Whilst some observations have provided me with new insights, others raise more questions. The issue of gender in particular, and research into differences in relation to types of engagement and process, is an important area that was beyond the scope of the thesis.

4.3 In writing the Masters, I became aware of the significance of the power relations between the parents or carers and the child, in relation to the creative process: what is allowed, what permission granted, and what is actively discouraged. This is an area that I considered pursuing, but the need to understand more about the nature of intuition took priority. The perception by the parent of mark making in itself, or any kind of (often messy) process involving fluid materials, of ways of constructing or taking apart, will inevitably influence the child. It may be an activity that is absolutely proscribed, or alternatively very prescribed and controlled. It would be essential to include research into how the 'appropriation' of found objects and materials is viewed by parents. The ways in which children will make marks, and where they make them is not always perceived positively. The extent of a parent or carer's tolerance, or encouragement, the provision of materials, the freedom to make use of 'unusual' or unconventional material or objects, all impact upon the degree to which the child is able to be creative in and with the things that surround them.



4.4 The interaction between social anthropology and psychoanalysis, and the correlations that were being made between the primitive and the infantile in relation to the artist, during that period in the early 1920s when Luquet was developing his thesis, is another area which whilst I have made certain references (to Bataille in particular), requires a substantial number of doctoral theses.

4.5 Three key factors that I identified very early on in the thesis, *gesture*, *imitation*, and *repetition* need much deeper as well as further investigation.

4.6 I had intended to research in much greater detail, the extent that what children do has influenced the *process* of artists since the time of Luquet. That they have influenced their imagery and more recently their fundamental approach to the creative process is without doubt. However I have been unable to analyze critically, through a series of case studies, the nature of that influence. The need to comprehend more fully the nature of intuition, and the concepts from Phenomenology identified in the *Findings* became more pressing, and the scope of the thesis too large to do it justice. It is in this area in particular where the enquiry has fallen short, much to my regret. I hope that by bringing attention in such detail to the nature of the process itself, as I have observed it, will provide a basis for further much needed research.



At the age of two and a half years old A pushed the broom firmly down onto the floor, let go of it to leave it standing, balanced and still, and then left the room

Figure 79

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- <sup>i</sup> Allen, R., (ed) (2001) *The New Penguin English Dictionary*, London, New York: Penguin Books.
- <sup>ii</sup> Danto, A., (2003) 'Obituary for Richard Wollheim', *The Guardian*, Wednesday 5 November.
- <sup>iii</sup> West, V., (1989) *An Enquiry into Process and Representation in the Visual Works of Young Children*, A Dissertation in part fulfillment of M.A., in Art Education, CNAA, Birmingham Polytechnic.
- <sup>iv</sup> Husserl, E., (1983) *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book*, trans. F. Kersten pp.211-35. The Hague: Nijhoff. From *The Phenomenology Reader* Dermot Moran and Timothy Mooney (eds), (2002) London & New York: Routledge. p.143.
- <sup>v</sup> Merleau-Ponty, M., (1994) 'Preface' *Phenomenology of Perception*. trans. Colin Smith, London, New York: Routledge, xvii - xviii.
- <sup>vi</sup> Macaan, C., (1993) *Four Phenomenological Philosophers: Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty*, London & New York: Routledge, p.52.
- <sup>vii</sup> Macaan, C., (1993) *Four Phenomenological Philosophers* p.16.
- <sup>viii</sup> Luquet, G-H., (2001) *Children's Drawings (Le Dessin Enfantin)* trans. Costall, London, New York: Free Association Books, p.153.
- <sup>ix</sup> Heidegger, M., (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', *Poetry, Language, Thought* Trans. A. Hofstadter, New York: Harper & Row, p.55.
- <sup>x</sup> Heidegger M., (2013) *Poetry, Language, Thought* Translated by Alfred Hofstadter. New York, London: Harper Perennial Modern Thought, xix
- <sup>xi</sup> Merleau-Ponty, M., (1964) 'The Child's Relations with Others', *The Primacy of Perception* trans. James M. Edie, U.S.A: Northwestern University Press. p.98.
- <sup>xii</sup> West V., (2007) 'Art Without Prescription' *Teaching Thinking & Creativity* Vol.8:3 (Winter)
- <sup>xiii</sup> Luquet, G-H., (2001) *Children's Drawings (Le Dessin Enfantin)* trans. Costall, London, New York: Free Association Books. p.154.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Matthews, J., (1999) *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence, The Construction of Meaning*, London: Falmer Press, p.38 xv - xvi.
- <sup>xv</sup> Luquet G-H., (2001) *Children's Drawings (Le Dessin Enfantin)* trans. Costall, London, New York: Free Association Books. The full passage is as follows: 'The intention to draw a certain object is the extension and manifestation of the child's mental representation: the object depicted is that which, in the mind of the artist, has momentarily come to take an exclusive or preponderant position' p.9, §6.
- <sup>xvi</sup> An entry from the artist's private journal, published in the catalogue *Gerhard Richter*, (1991) London: Tate Gallery, pp.123-4.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Gass W.H., (1988) 'Introduction' Rainer Maria Rilke *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, trans. Stephen Mitchell, London: Pan Books Ltd.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Heidegger, M., (1971) 'The Origin of the Work of Art', *Poetry, Language, Thought* Trans. A. Hofstadter, New York: Harper & Row, p.62.
- <sup>xix</sup> Green C., (2005) *Picasso, Architecture and Vertigo*, Newhaven & London: Yale University Press, pp.189 - 225.
- <sup>xx</sup> Fineberg J., (1997) *The Innocent Eye, Children's Art and the Modern Artist*, UK & USA, Princeton University Press, 'Reawakening the Beginnings: The Art of Paul Klee', pp.82 - 119.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Fineberg J., (1997) *The Innocent Eye, Children's Art and the Modern Artist*, p.209.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Fineberg J., (1997) *The Innocent Eye, Children's Art and the Modern Artist*, p.218.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Stern D.L., (2000) *The Interpersonal World of the Infant, A View from Psychoanalysis & Developmental Psychology*, New York: Basic Books, Perseus Books Group.

## APPENDIX

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1. *Processes, Materials and Methods*: power-point to be viewed with section on Chapter 2: Materials & Methods.
2. Creative Partnerships: Evaluation.
3. Creative Partnerships: Final Report. Both 2 & 3 to be viewed with section on *Creative Partnerships*, Chapter 2: Materials & Methods.
4. 'Art Without Prescription': article published in *Teaching Thinking & Creativity* Vol.8:3, developed from Creative Partnerships Report.
5. 'Architecture, Space and Pedagogy in Pistoia' published in E-Book: developed from paper presented at 'Creative Engagements CE8: Thinking with Children', Conference, Oxford, July 2012.
6. Film *Plot 74*: DVD, documentary of discovery of objects, and their experimental embellishment.
7. *Re-Semble*: documentation of collaborative site-specific installation, Chris Wright & Veronica West, Derby 2010.
8. *Gold Cuts*: power-point & on DVD with:
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## APPENDIX 1

### *PROCESSES, MATERIALS & METHODS*

# PROCESSES, MATERIALS & METHODS

The following are further examples of material gathered during my daughters' early years, They will be included as an archive in the exhibition that is timed to coincide with the doctoral examination. They are grouped here under broad headings related to the taxonomy of processes listed on p.143 of the thesis.



# APPROPRIATION & EMBELLISHMENT













to Rebecca with  
lots of love from  
Raven.



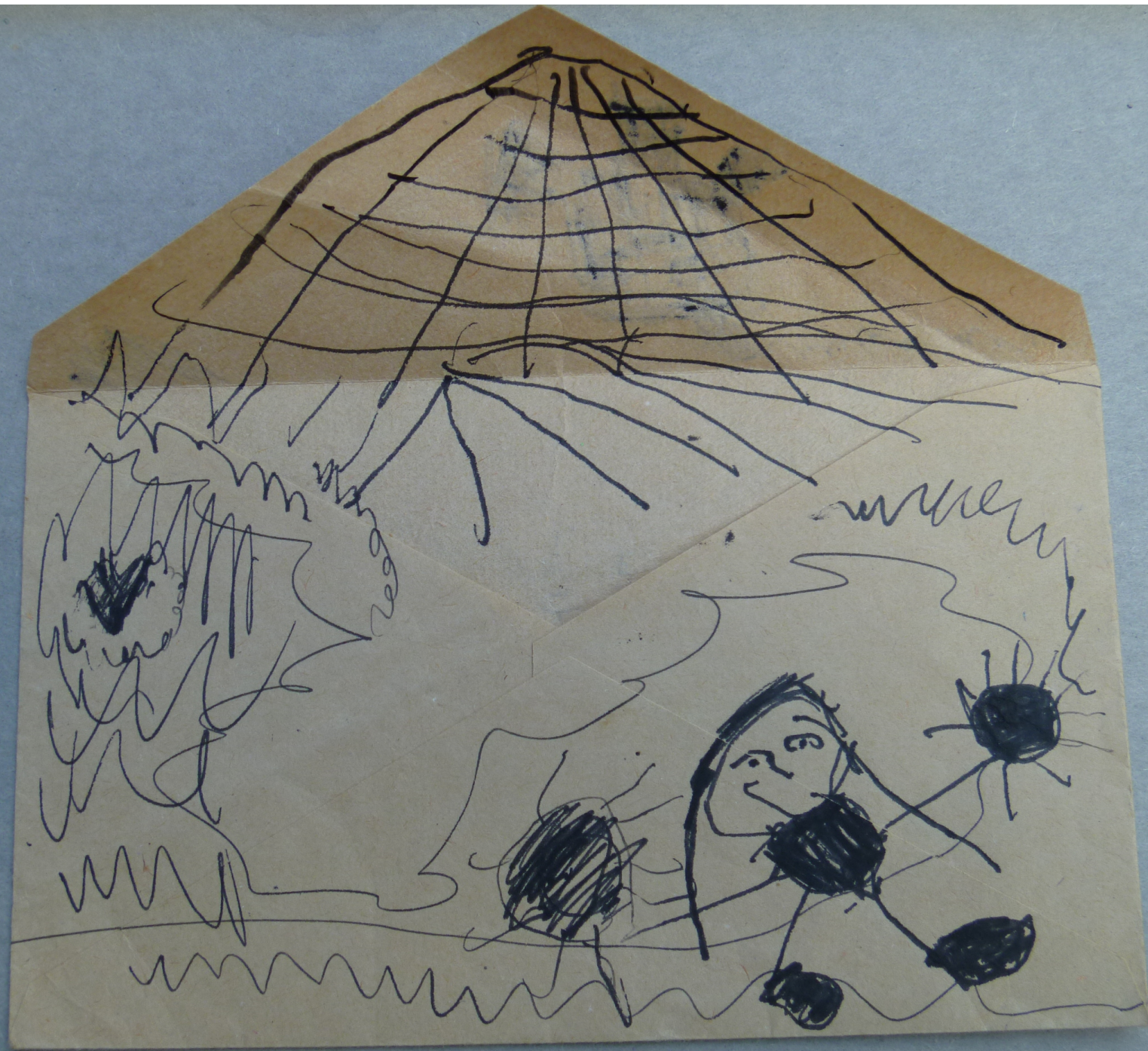














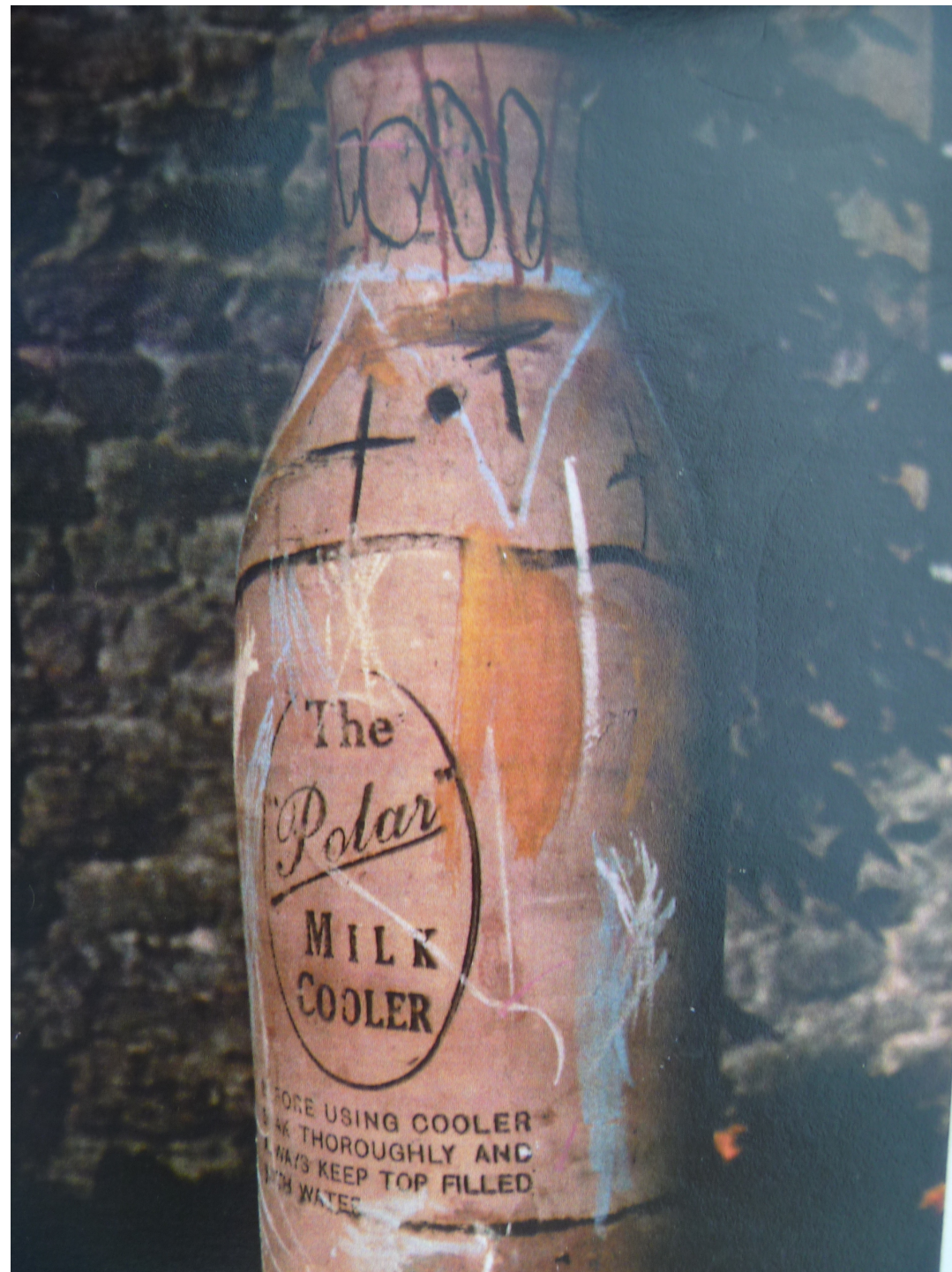
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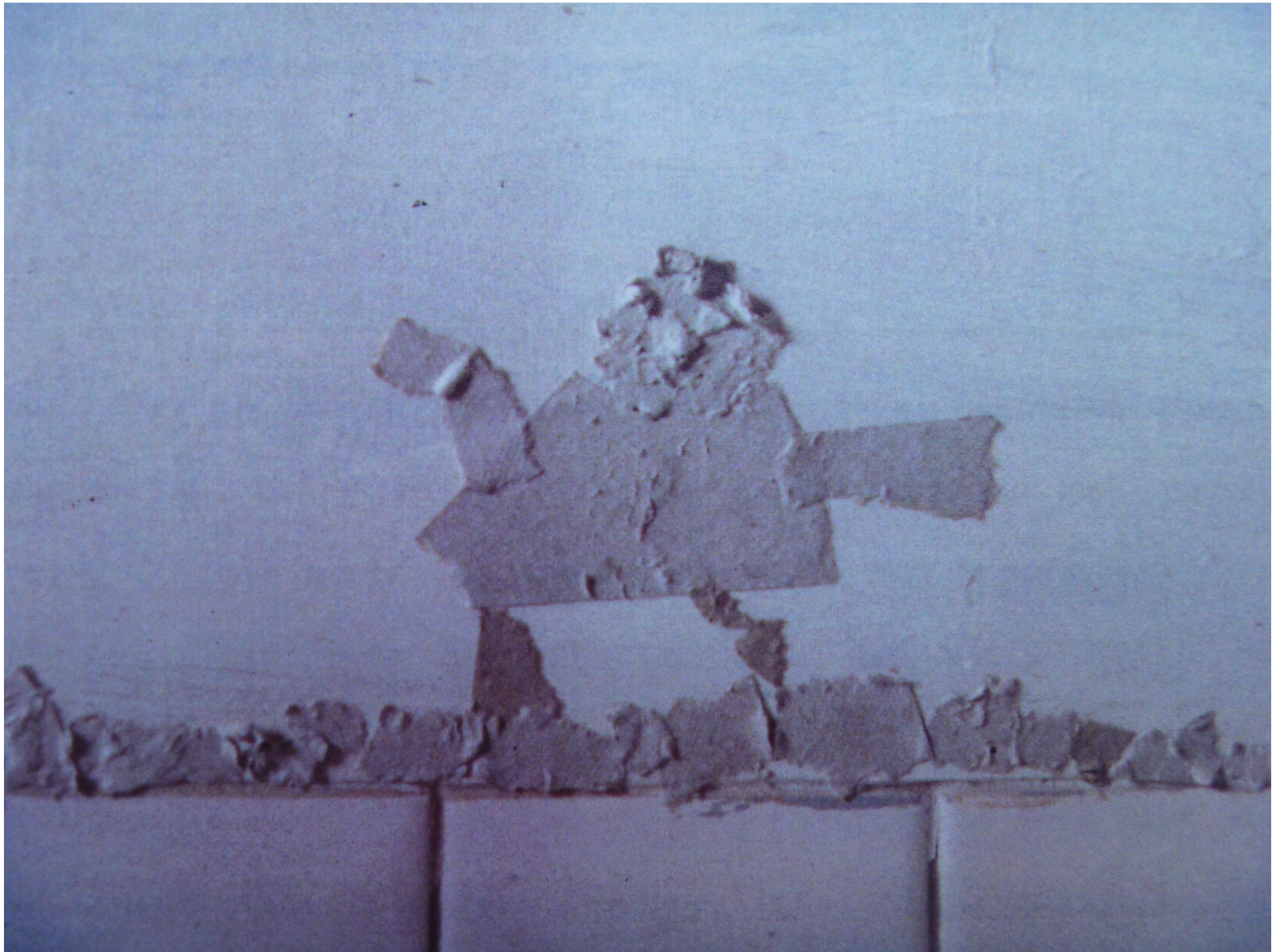






# APPROPRIATION OF MATERIALS







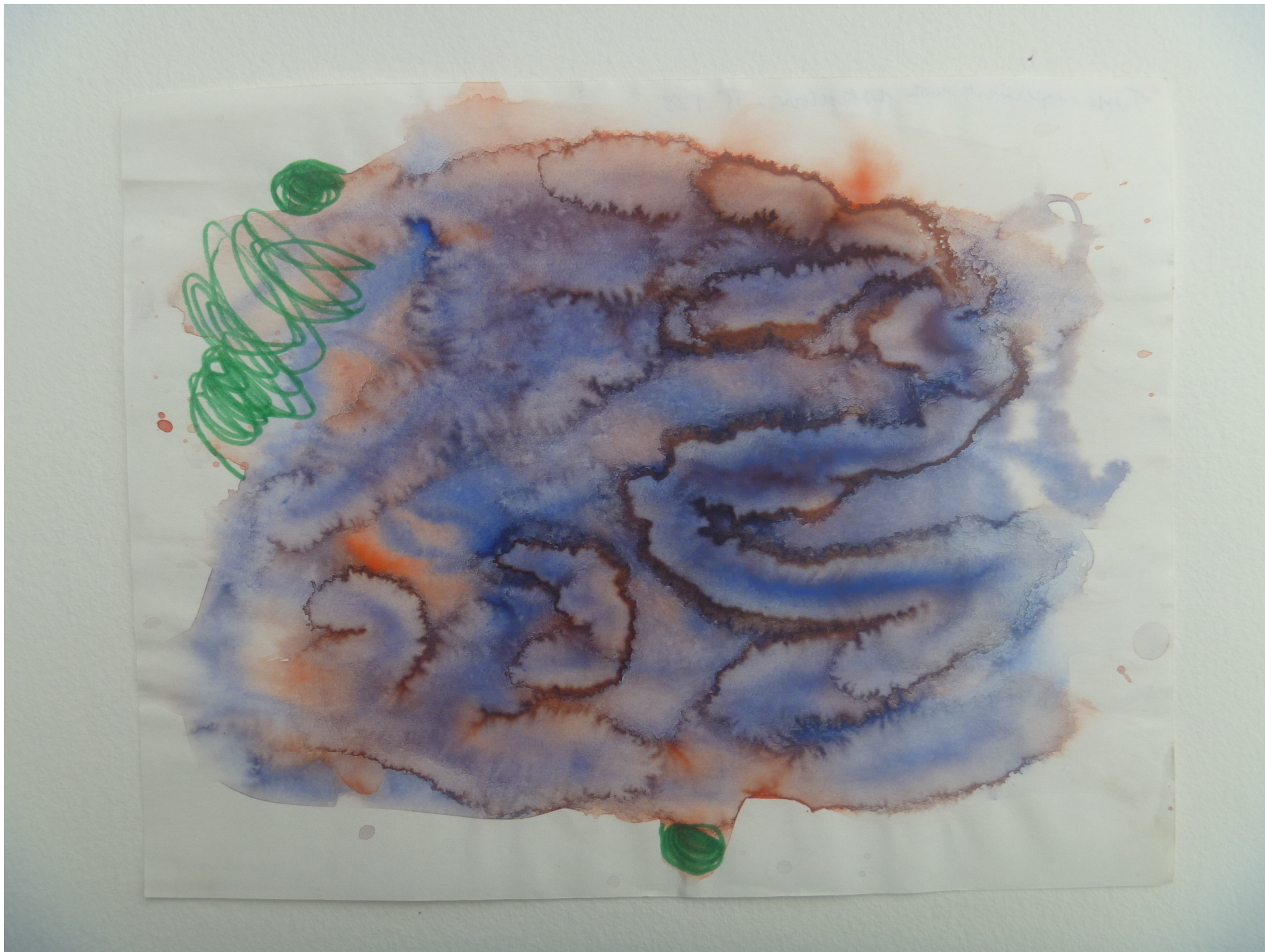








# EXPLORATION OF A MEDIUM AND AUTOMATISM

















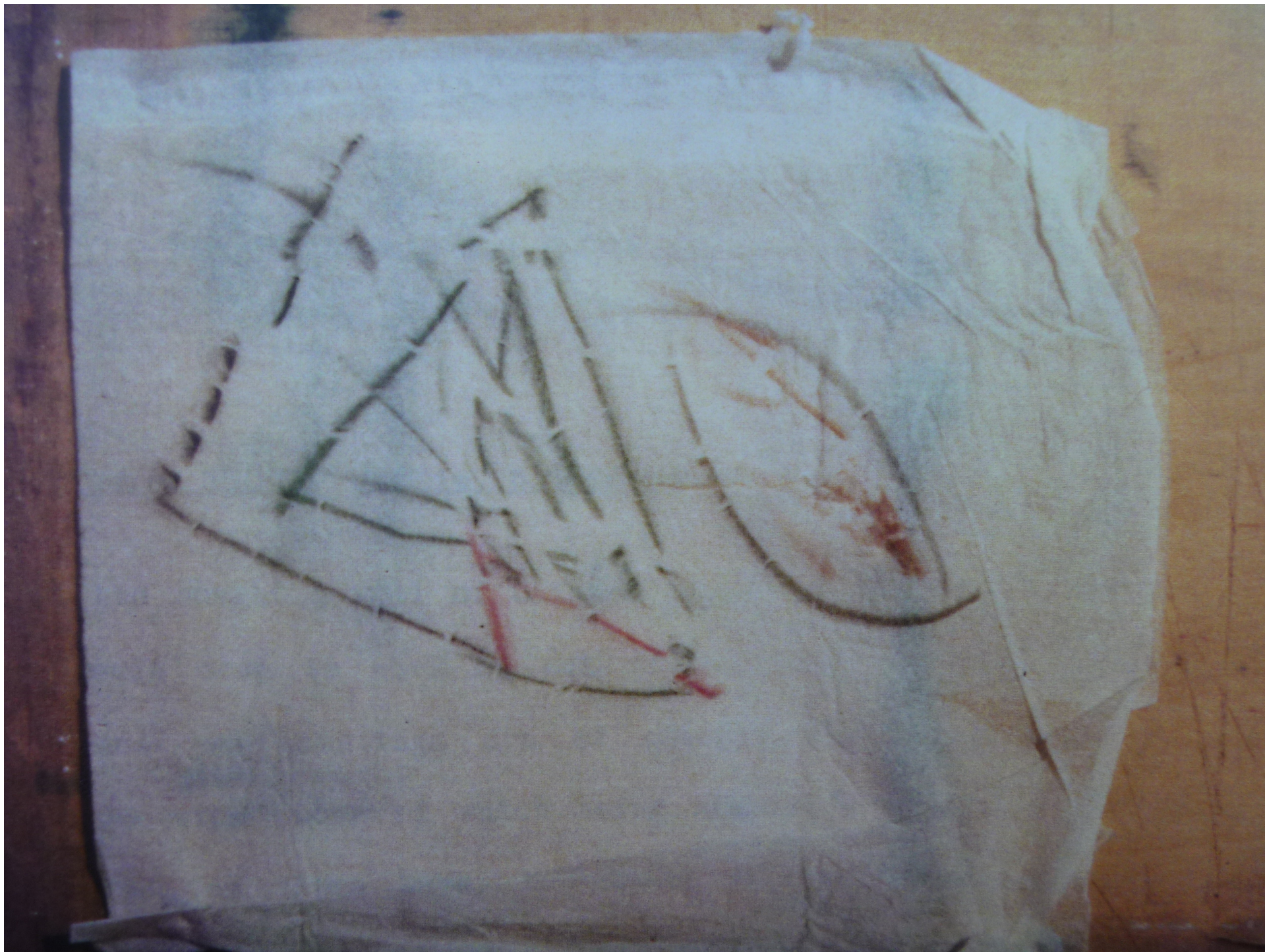






# SENSITIVITY TO MATERIAL & APPROPRIATENESS OF MEDIUM USED WITH IT









## APPENDIX 2

### *CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS EVALUATION*

## **Primary Schools Project with Creative Partnerships, Derby 2006 - 7**

This project began as a result of discussions with Paula Moss who was aware of the work I had done for a Masters in Art Education on children's spontaneous interaction with found images. She attended the exhibition at Sudbury Hall in 2002 which included a series of paintings of my own; a series of images that I had collected made by my children between the age of 3 and 7 years; and extracts from the MA dissertation which provided commentaries on them. I had already been working on a proposal to study for a Ph.D at Staffordshire University in order to continue the work I began for the Masters. In further discussions with Paula about the work of Creative Partnerships the idea for a project of this kind began to emerge, and she proposed a meeting with Caroline Barth to explore possible financial support and planning. As a result of that meeting a decision was made to pursue an application for funding through Creative Partnerships, and this was agreed in April 2006, with the collaboration of Staffordshire University. The project began with a series of meetings with the head-teachers and teachers in the two schools identified, with the aim to start in the classroom from the beginning of May.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Paula Moss and Caroline Barth at Creative Partnerships, Linda Sullivan and Ian Bell head teachers at Dale and St.James respectively, and most especially Clare Fitzgerald at Dale, and Cherie Roberts and Dan Wall at St.James who have put it into operation and been prepared to test it out despite all the other demands on their valuable time.

This account is a summary of the findings so far.

Title of proposal for PhD:

How Children See: Vision, Process and Meaning in Children's Art and its relation to Fine Art practice.

Aims of the investigation:

1. Evaluate existing models of children's visually creative processes and use the information obtained to revise and amend them as necessary.
2. Explore the relevance of a revised model to an understanding of contemporary fine art practice.

Question:

What can children's spontaneous interaction with found images and objects reveal about their awareness and understanding of 1, visual culture, 2. the self and others.

**Summary of Discussions held with Caroline Barth, Project Manager, and Paula Moss of Creative Partnerships at Derby Dance Centre, November 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> 2005.**

Methodology:

Through discussions with Caroline Barth and Paula Moss about a possible collaboration with Creative Partnerships, the following ideas have emerged:

1. Identify specific groups at two key stages of their primary education: between Reception and Year 1; and between Years 4 and 5.
2. Conduct the project across two schools with the later Years 4/5 groups to have a means of comparison.
3. Target specific groups for example the 'Pyramid Club' at Dale for children 'at risk of becoming invisible'.
4. Consider the use of more informal periods of time in the school day at lunchtime or after school clubs, as well as during the normal class time.
5. Conduct the projects over a period of time to form a longitudinal study and develop a sense of normality.

We discussed possibilities for joint funding with Staffordshire University, which would be necessary to provide time for me to work with the schools. I shall discuss this with Dr. Douglas Burnham my principal supervisor for the PhD, and seek support to make a joint bid to the AHRC with Creative Partnerships. Caroline Barth declared her interest for the project and her willingness to approve funding.



## **February 2006**

### **Summary of Discussion with Paula Moss, 6/2/2006**

Our discussion aimed to clarify the time-scale, structure and funding required for the project which Creative Partnerships has agreed will take place with the support of their co-ordinators and the head teachers of the two primary schools in Derby.

We worked out that in order to give the project sufficient time to develop it would be necessary to start it during the coming Summer term from May 1st, and have it continue through the whole of the following academic year 2006 - 7.

We built into the calculation of the number of days needed, days for preparation and consultation with the heads and teachers in each of the schools, for ourselves, and for consultation with relevant parties who can advise and are engaged in similar work with Creative Partnerships. We also built in the time necessary for review and evaluation. Materials will be funded separately.

### **Time Schedule: 2006-7**

Periods of time:	Weeks
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#### **2006**

May 1 - 26	4
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June 19 - July 21	5
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Sept.11 - Oct 20	5
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Oct.30 - Dec.15	7
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#### **2007**

Jan.8- Feb.9	5
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Feb.19 - March 30	6
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April 23 - May 25	5
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June 11-July 20	<u>6</u>
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43

***8 blocks of time with a review at the end of each = 4days total***

One day each fortnight =	22 days
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Preparation	6
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Review	<u>4</u>
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<u>Total</u>	<u>32 days</u>
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## **Evaluation of Pilot Projects held in Derby Schools during the Summer Term 2006.**

### **From May 2006: Pilot Projects**

*The pilots were held at two primary schools in Derby: Dale and St.James.*

*At Dale the group was in Year 3, and at St.James, the group was in Year 4.*

The pilot projects were held in order to test out the feasibility of introducing into the classroom a situation in which children could do whatever they wanted with materials provided. In order to fulfil the requirements of the PhD study, it was essential that the children were not directed in any way, and that they were provided with material to which they could respond and which they could alter, add to, embellish or use in whatever way they liked. The aim was to discover how they saw the material and how they responded to it without having been given a specific aim or task.

***The key criteria for the pilots were the following:***

1. The teacher must not direct the child in any way.
2. The child must choose to use the materials.
3. There is no demand to complete what the child does.
4. No aim or purpose is given for the activity.
5. A sense of normality is developed i.e. the project is not treated as 'special'.
6. The children become used to the availability of the materials regularly.
7. There is a guaranteed amount of time given to it whenever it occurs.

Discussions took place in order to set up the projects with the Head Teachers of both schools, the Creative Partnerships coordinator Paula Moss and the members of staff who were going to be engaged with it on a regular basis. It was important that the project could run in such a way that it was 'normalised' and part of the child's everyday experience, not an exceptional 'event' in which special things would happen. It therefore placed a lot of responsibility on the teachers involved and it was very important that they were interested and felt able to take ownership of the project, not feel it was something they were doing under duress. Also it was very important that they embrace the purpose of the project, which in certain respects goes against the demands usually made upon them to be in control and to achieve specific targets within the national curriculum.

### ***Overview of results of pilot projects***

It was particularly interesting to find that the two schools responded very differently to the idea of the project, and whilst one felt able to integrate it into the daily timetable, the other considered that it could only happen during the lunch break, and initially that it could only happen every other week, alternating with a 'science' box. In both cases materials were provided in boxes bought especially which would be taken out at the agreed times.

The materials comprised a range of different papers, of different weights, colours and textures (some embossed and some hand-made); a range of different surfaces eg. wood veneers, a thick rubbery material, artificial fleece, corrugated card, strips of wood, ribbon, metallic papers; a mixture of found images, postcards, newspaper cuttings; a range of pens (coloured felt-tips, fine-liners) graphite pencils, oil pastels; and some three-dimensional objects (plastic numbers, cardboard tubes, strips of wood)

The results from each school were dramatically different. In one case (Dale) the children produced a proliferation of material in a very short period of time, which surprised their teacher as well as myself. In the other (St.James) there was a very limited response, and the most interesting material appears to have been produced by a sister of one of the children involved.

The material produced at Dale covered a wide range of 'strategies' or types of response, or motivation which echoed many of those I had observed in my own children: formal, repetitive, sensitive to the qualities of the materials, communication, reparation, experimentation, emblematic or symbolic.

### ***March 2006: Initial meeting at St. James***

This was an initial meeting with Paula Moss, Cherie Roberts, Cita and myself. Cherie is the main link with CP in the school, and the teacher with whom I shall be working initially for the pilot project. After my introduction of the aims and possible forms the project could take, it became evident that Cherie thought I intended working with children with special needs. This may have been the result of mentioning the possibility of working with a group called the 'Pyramid Club' at Dale, which was devised for those children at risk of 'becoming invisible'. She told us about a boy who has a mental age of 3 - 4 who is at present in year 4, who is very good at 3D construction and cutting out. It has become evident that there are children in both schools who are identified as having special needs who are especially inventive and interesting in their response to the project (see report on meeting

with Claire Fitzgerald below). The discussion that followed then concentrated mainly on the practical delivery of the project. There is very little space at St. James that is not dedicated for specific purposes, and we all agreed that it would be best for it to happen in her classroom with a constant group of children (Year 4) who tend to stay in after 12.00 to do things in the classroom before lunch at 12.30.

Cherie proposed an 'activity table' which would have art materials on it, and we talked about the need to have a range of materials with different qualities, found materials, newspaper cuttings, card, cartons, cardboard boxes etc. However Cherie proposed also that there should be a 'rotation' of different boxes with 'art' materials one week, then science the next( with magnets, paper-clips etc.) and then play materials like hats, costume, false noses etc. First of all she wanted this on the same table but I stressed the importance of keeping a clear sense of what was the key concept of the enquiry and not having too many different kinds of stimulus, or heavily prescriptive items (hats, false noses etc) We therefore agreed a compromise: a table for 'spontaneous art activity' for one week (actually only the three days a week when she is there) and then one week of a 'science' activity table. Not ideal, but it could be an interesting extension of the project to other curriculum areas. It was essential that Cherie felt in charge of the project and able to engage in it positively so this discussion was crucial.

The artist in residence who was part of our discussion (working with music to further an understanding of music) was interested to know if I wanted to or would allow the inclusion of instruments for sound. I am not sure if I understood him correctly but I did say that although a lot of visual artists are also working with sound now (as they are with film, video and photography) I needed to keep the focus clear for the time being. However it was very interesting to think of including sound objects and sound as a part of a holistic exploration of creative play.

We also discussed ways of observing and recording what they do. Does the work go up on a board? It needs to be kept but how? I could be there while they are working on Fridays and photograph the work afterwards. Could we set up a camera? Video? At present we need to have pilot schemes, and this was agreed to start after the Whitsuntide holiday, to run through until the end of the Summer term.

***May 5th: Meeting with Paula Moss and Linda Sullivan, head-teacher at Dale.***

I found it very interesting that Linda was very quick to comprehend the purpose of the project, and it was immediately seen as a project that could be integrated into the school day, and not separated out. This was quite remarkable, that she found no impediment or difficulty in facilitating this and saw it as an essential condition, in contrast to my experience at St.James where it was seen as something that could not be integrated into the daily timetable, but had to be kept clear and separate as a very different activity. This would therefore provide an interesting contrast, and both approaches would be informative whatever happened.

***Meeting the same day with Cherie and Ian Bell the head-teacher at St.James***

This was to decide on the methods we were to use. We agreed they need to be:

- 1.regular,
- 2.normal,
- 3.be in the intimacy of the class 'family', and build up their sense of security (in order to give them the permission or feel they have permission to make or transform the material).
- 4.be able to be impermanent, as a means of freedom and release.
5. be able to take the materials to a table to work on by themselves (privacy as a necessary aspect to be possible, as well as collaboration with others).
6. take place for 30 minutes at lunch-time for three days a week.
7. 'art' materials would alternate with 'science' materials on a weekly basis.
8. materials would include: a range of papers, clippings from newspapers and magazines, a range of items gathered from the 'play and recycled centre' in Derby, felt-tip pens, a range of different pencils, oil pastels, hand-made papers of different colours and qualities and various other items that I may come across that would be three-dimensional.
9. Cherie would observe and record what they did with the materials without a demand for explanation.

The head-teacher commented that "certain colleagues could not allow themselves not to be in charge". This was interesting as much of our discussion seemed to revolve around issues of control, limitations (of time, place and materials), permission. I was particularly interested in Cherie's concern that the children would be inhibited and even afraid to make a mark; that to make a mark is a permanent act that they may feel anxious about (is it right? ok? what will they think about it?) I assured her that there should not be any pressure on the child to make a mark, but the mark was very important in some of the examples I showed them, to the transformation of the material. The head-teacher mentioned the 'Matisse letter' (see PP.1) and how the very simple and minimal drawing upon which the cut-out was placed gave the figure



a context and particular message. This was a very interesting and accurate perception of what made that particular example so striking. I had taken with me a set of illustrations from my MA dissertation which demonstrated the kind of things I thought might be produced, which were made by my children with a range of found objects and other materials.

Cherie said the big challenge of the project is the lack of structure. They have to think of how to structure learning all the time, and my questions on the effect of Ofsted and SATS was responded to with real feeling.

### ***July 2006***

The following is a summary of the meetings I held with the teachers involved, at the end of the Summer term. By this time a very marked difference of response was evident between the two groups. In the Year 3 group at Dale the response was enthusiastic, highly productive, inventive, surprising and wide-ranging, with some high levels of crafting evident in some of the work produced. At St.James the Year 4 group had used the materials to only a limited degree and little had been kept.

### ***Meeting with Clare Fitzgerald - Year 3***

The children had produced a lot of material in a very short time - this pilot started after the Whitsun break and had only been going for two weeks when I visited  
Clare summarised her observations in the following main points:

1. The children take up the opportunity to work with the materials mostly in the afternoon.
2. They feel very possessive of it.
3. The information is already very interesting, and surprising.
4. Unexpected children are coming up with the most interesting things.
5. Most children in the class are achieving at below the national average (this is supposed to be a mixed ability group, but the top of the group went to another class).
6. The higher achieving children academically, are making more conventional things.

Clare was excited by the crossover with science as a result of one child's piece. She had chosen to work with oil pastels on a rubbery piece of material, which was already cut into an long oblong shape. On one side she had layered colours in a series of stripes to make complex mixed colours in a sequence based on the rainbow. On the other side she drew a picture of a rainbow. When Clare asked her why she chose that material she said 'Because it's flexible' and demonstrated by curving it into the shape of a rainbow. Her choice of this term 'flexible' is unusual and significant for her age and level of ability. (see PP.2 - 4)

The children demonstrated a keen awareness of the qualities of materials and chose them for their specific qualities. In addition to the cross-over with science in the recognition of specific properties like 'flexibility' materials were chosen also for what could be deduced (though not stated) : qualities such as 'fragility', and 'texture'. There were two examples of a delicate textured tissue, so delicate it had torn slightly, being chosen as a surface upon which to draw and colour in a series of overlapping circles. These were drawn in such a regular way they must have used a template (a lid or circular object) to repeat the exact same circle.

(see PP.5-8)

Another child made two pieces on kitchen roll and wallpaper, both textured: one was quite free, the other very subtle, layered and controlled with a sequence of colours laid on in bands of pale blue, green, yellow, pink, with two different browns (one lighter, one darker) in lines, like a check, over the top, very geometric at right-angles. These were made by a child who came to the school 18 months ago, and refused/ could not make a mark on paper and even without any duress would clearly be distressed if he thought this was required of him. Over the intervening time he has gradually started to write and draw, but Clare was very surprised to discover that these were his. (see PP.9-11)

There was evidence of different 'motives' or intentions in the range of work produced. This I found fascinating as it mirrored certain of my own observations of my own children and the way they worked. For example, there were purely abstract explorations of form, colour and texture (the circles); there were 'portraits' (see PP. 12-13); there were 'letters' - often these were intimate or confidential letters to their teacher, or to other children in the class; these were often works of reparation, made as an apology or as gifts to make up for bad behaviour, or they were thank you letters, or letters of appreciation.(see PP.14 - 17)

One very striking piece was unusual in that it was 3D and ingeniously constructed. Initially we interpreted it differently from what was intended (a crane). The child who made it returned to it three times to complete it, and it used a variety of different objects and qualities of materials. There had been some instances of bullying in the class and this child had been implicated. There were other letters of support often with portraits which related to this issue also.

Another example illustrated the exploitation of the physical characteristics of the found material chosen in a different way, one I had already used as an example for the MA. This was the use of the envelope, and specifically making use of the flap. The gold envelope is drawn on (very delicately so it is barely visible) on the back both on top and hidden under the flap, to make a complete image when it is opened up. (see PP. 18 - 20)

The children also responded to current events, especially the World Cup that was going on throughout this time. They made some fascinating images using flags and different found materials some of which were juxtaposed with imported materials from India. (see PP.20-22)

Clare recognised the need for the children to return to what they were doing so they could continue with it, and provided them with a box to put their unfinished pieces in. This was her initiative. It demonstrates her recognition of the child's need to have the freedom and autonomy to be in charge of the pace of work. Further important observations involved the children's attitudes and behaviour during the time they were working with the materials:

1. Whatever their ability, it keeps them occupied for as much time as you will give them.
2. They never get bored.
3. There are no behaviour problems amongst the group whilst engaged.
4. There are no arguments.
5. They never say they have finished.
6. They know it goes in a 'special' box to keep it.
7. They take out, they tidy up and put away.

### ***Class Organisation***

Clare Fitzgerald's group method involved a rotation of children who chose to do it for the afternoon, whilst other children were engaged on other projects. When I visited there were 3 main groups (around 30 in the class when all there). There were around 8 working with art materials, 8-10 on a geography project, and 8 -10 working around a table on a drawing as part of another geography project. At one point during my visit she selected from a group who wanted to use the art materials having finished their other tasks, choosing 3 from about 6/7 who put their hands up.

#### ***Meeting with Cherie Roberts and Paula Moss at St.James 22/6/2006 - Year 4***

As has been stated earlier, the timing and structuring of the project at St.James was entirely different from Dale, and was situated in the lunch break immediately after the morning session and before lunch, between 12.00 and 12.30. A group of about eight girls regularly stay on into the lunch-break and this was the group that was provided with the opportunity to work with the materials.

There had been little response so far, so we discussed whether there were too many things in the box, so we stripped a lot out, added scissors and glue, opened up the boxes of oil pastels so they would be more accessible. There would be four more weeks when the project could run, and the plan would now be to keep the box there all the time, but monitor the materials more regularly.

We discussed the importance of ownership, and the children being given the opportunity to own it and that it is normal, rather than special. Cherie said 'whatever happens I'll carry on with this in Year 6'.

#### ***Concluding Meeting at St.James July 2006***

Whilst observing at St.James, and talking with the children about what they were doing it became evident that little more had been done, and the materials although they had been taken out, and rummaged about in had not been used to make things. There was no box for things that had been made, or for continuing work on anything and I went to pick one up from the car, as I had anticipated it would be necessary to provide one. Each school had been provided with two boxes, one of which contained selected materials and drawing implements, scissors etc., and the other contained a further supply of papers and other materials for replenishing the stock. The children I observed (four girls) were making a card for a teacher who was leaving. This was a group activity which made use of a rather remarkably patterned strip of gold paper which I discovered was made by an older sister of one of them, and had been brought in.

I was introduced to Dan Walls who she thought would be interested in working with me in September, and we agreed to discuss it in detail then.

### *Preparations for the next academic year*

#### **St.James: Meeting with Cherie and Dan. 11/10/06**

This was a meeting in order to gather information, and have an open discussion of possibilities now that I shall be working with a different teacher, Dan Walls during this academic year. I want to find out why it is so different at St. James in relation to meeting curricular demands. These were the answers to a range of questions I formulated beforehand:

#### **1. What level, age and range of ability is the class that we may be working with?**

Seven to eight year olds - Level 1 - 3 National Curriculum. All the pupils come from Rosehill and St.James Infant Schools. It has taken some time for them to adjust, and are only now becoming settled. Project has been going for about one week - 10days

#### **2. Do you see it as feasible that the materials and possibility of working with them can occur everyday as a regular part of the day?**

At present it is taking place at lunchtime and/ or after school, and if they finish tasks during the morning or afternoon classes. They are still not sufficiently settled in to do it during normal class time.

#### **3. Do you think it is necessary to classify the tasks and what happens if you do not, i.e. these are things to 'do things with' not ART or SCIENCE - things to experiment with, play with, make with?**

This question was not answered precisely, although it was clear that he felt there would be a need to classify it if it occurred during class hours. He said it could happen in 'golden time', or 'art and design time' (45 minutes per week). He felt it would be difficult to see it happening on a daily basis.

#### **4. How do you feel about not having a specific outcome to aim for?**

The entire organisation of class and methods used are goal oriented. The whole class works towards the same goal, with different levels of ability. A few are doing basic work in English. The day is structured as follows: AM: Literacy hour - 9.45 - 10.45, Numeracy - 11.00 - 12.00, PM: Foundation subject & cross - curricular links, History, Geography.

The children need a visual timetable and want to know what will be happening in the day. I took this answer as meaning that it was very unusual and problematic not to have a clear goal to aim for, and a specific end product.



*The following questions remained unanswered as there was no more time left for our interview, but we shall return to them at a later date:*

- 5. Describe the structure of the class - the lay-out of the classroom. How are the children taught? What strategies are used?**
- 6. The critical issue of how it is put to the children and whether a demand is implied (this can occur simply through the terms used - 'art-box', 'science-box')**
- 7. Do you need to have a specific limit on how long this continues in order to give it the conditions that appear to be the best for things to happen?**
- 8. What materials do you think it would be good to work with, and do you think these should be very specific, or wide-ranging as before?**

***Additional comments:***

We had very little time as Dan was about to start teaching - I had visited at lunchtime, so the remaining questions (5 - 8) were abandoned but Dan did tell me the following series of observations he had made of the project in operation:

- a) The children don't ask what to do.
- b) They say they can use whatever is in the boxes.
- c) They get the boxes out, bring it to the carpet and then get started.
- d) They don't ask for help.
- e) They don't fall out.
- f) At present it is mostly girls who are doing it, but now the boys are doing it too, working for 20 - 30 minutes at a time. (5 - 6 girls at a time).

The striking thing about talking to Dan was that he was very determined that it should be totally controlled by the children, and he only found out about what they were doing by observing or being invited into or told about what they were doing. He said that he would take digital photographs of the children whilst engaged in the activity. He said he would also take notes, and ask them what they like and don't like about what they are doing.

### ***Meeting with Clare Fitzgerald at Dale, December 6th 2006***

We agreed that we need time to collect information and consult with one another: up to 4 days until July, to enable writing up and discussing the outcomes of the project. She told me that 'Write to Excite', her transposition of the project into English, had been adopted by the school without prior discussion with her and she was clearly upset that the ownership of that particular aspect of the project had been effectively removed without her authorship being recognised. (I am wondering if there is a reason for these transpositions, with Cherie to Science and with Claire to English, and if it is perhaps because these are the subjects they feel most confident with).

We discussed the idea of using video to record what the children do - Claire to ask Linda (head-teacher) so we can get parents' permission.. We also agreed that Wednesday and Friday mornings are the best times for me to meet Clare, and discussed the nature of the way in which the National Curriculum impacts on her teaching. She described the way the day is structured:

AM: every lesson has an objective: with numeracy the objective is stated at the beginning and repeated (including a warm up session of 10 minutes). This continues for 50 minutes, with teaching for 30 minutes and then into groups for 20 minutes. The same formula for Literacy - both occur in the morning.

PM: in the afternoon they have a 'Topic' - conducted with the whole class or in groups (differentiated).

She mentioned that previously when they had sets, the children were going out to different teachers, and there often was no overlap, so there could be at least 50 children being taught by one teacher in one day. Now the children stay with Clare all the time. 'Art' is entirely separate from the Topic. All this is part of the prescribed national curriculum. Teachers are able to write their own but rarely do. I was particularly interested to discover that the teaching materials for the curriculum in art and design are supplied by an independent company, with a heavily prescriptive approach.

We discussed the idea to follow one child. B for example, a child with special needs, (language delay - i.e. has not made progress in language acquisition). There is evidently a strong move away from statementing. Educational psychologists appear reluctant to do this. It is very difficult to get extra money for children with special needs. With issues of language, and numeracy they will do an assessment and suggest a programme of work, but no extra teaching assistance. One Year 1 child has huge developmental issues, but no extra support which makes it impossible for the teacher to conduct the class. (the child tends to run away!)

Clare has 2 hours a day with the help of an assistant - and there is extra language tuition on a one to one basis, with those children taken out of the class for their session.

We planned a different emphasis for the project, with a different set of things per half-term. For after Christmas we agreed that:

1. I shall take in a set of 'found' images for them to respond to.
2. I could follow certain children - eg. B and K: tomboyish, might have behaviour problems, and Clare had no idea she could draw until a couple of weeks ago.

(She showed me a figure she had drawn all in proportion with a lot of detail, shaded in, a very lively face and fingers, shoes with bows, and the angle of the legs and arms gave it energy and vitality).

Whilst I observed she spent the whole time (half an hour) painting very carefully, also drawing, and using different media (types of crayon) on a long strip, working systematically along it with a range of different patterns.

### ***Meeting with Clare Fitzgerald Feb.2nd. 2007***

Strategy for after half-term:

Follow these three children in particular;

1. B - significant language delay, special needs (P level, reception).
2. F - 'an enigma' - refugee (family gained refugee status ten years ago - Somali Eritrean in England for six years)
3. K- mystery, bizarre answers, unpredictable. Pakistani muslim family - wears Hijab which is unusual for an infant. Quite defiant and rude to adults at present with a history of being 'light-fingered' in previous classes. Product of second marriage therefore has much older siblings. Father re-married. Her father sent a letter back to Clare after an enquiry was made about the meaning of her name: 'we don't know what her name means, but she means the world to us'. She is bright - not top, but close.

We discussed ways of working with materials: two possible ways:

1. 3D - using the modular cardboard units (all the same) that I had taken in for them. These open out and have a locking system. These would not be altered but played /built with?
  2. 2D images to change, add to, cut out. I need to gather some more on a range of surfaces.
- Finally, we need to arrange a session with Clare to compare her notes and observations with mine, and to gather the necessary information on the context and the individuals studied.

## APPENDIX 3

### *CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS: FINAL REPORT*

*'What If?'*

*'How Children See and What Children Make of Things'*

Final Report on a Project initiated by Veronica West with Creative Partnerships Derby.



I would like to express my sincere thanks to Paula Moss and Caroline Barth at Creative Partnerships, Linda Sullivan and Ian Bell head teachers at Dale and St James respectively, and most especially Clare Fitzgerald at Dale, and Cherry Roberts and Dan Wall at St.James who have put it into operation and been prepared to test out these ideas despite all the other demands on their valuable time.

The project is part of my research for a doctorate entitled 'How Children See: Vision, Process and Meaning in Children's Art and its relation to Fine Art practice'. Its aims are to:

- 1.Evaluate existing models of children's visually creative processes and use the information obtained to revise and amend them as necessary.
2. Explore the relevance of a revised model to an understanding of contemporary fine art practice.

The particular question underlying the project was the following: what can children's spontaneous interaction with found images and objects reveal about their awareness and understanding of visual culture, the self and others?

The pilot projects were held in order to test out the feasibility of introducing into the classroom a situation in which children could do whatever they wanted with materials provided. In order to fulfil the requirements of the PhD study, it was essential that the children were not directed in any way, and that they were provided with material to which they could respond and which they could alter, add to, embellish or use in whatever way they liked. The aim was to discover how they saw the material and how they responded to it without having been given a specific aim or task.

This was reported on in an evaluation sent to Creative Partnerships in Derby and in an article that was written for the journal 'Teaching Thinking' edited by Steve Williams. In writing this it was important to place the project in the context of the national curriculum and the pressures put on teachers to deliver specific outcomes. I attach the PDF document as part of this report, but it is useful here to quote the following from it: 'In this article I shall describe an approach to learning that could be used in the teaching of *art and design* at primary level. It provides children with the opportunity to be inventive with materials and to make something for themselves. It also gives teachers an opportunity to discover what children know and how they see things. It provides a means of observing children's ways of thinking and solving problems for themselves, rather than testing their ability to copy the model provided.

Presenting a predefined model for imitation is prescriptive. The approach I offer is not. Steve Williams, the editor, asked me why it was so important that it was not prescriptive, and I said 'so that the child is given the opportunity to *discover their intention in the process of making something*.' He made me pursue this thought further, and asked why that was important. I said '*because the child realizes (or brings about) the meaning*'. In other words, in the case of a prescriptive methodology, if the child is shown what to do, and sees the result, with the clear aim being to produce that kind of thing, this realization is denied, there is no discovery, no invention, and most importantly *it has no specific meaning or relevance for the child*. In Steve's interview with Guy Claxton (*Teaching Thinking & Creativity*, Winter 2004) Claxton refers to the work of Margaret Boden of the University of Sussex, and what she describes as 'transformational creativity', which requires a questioning approach to situations and materials, a 'what if' way of thinking 'which pushes the bounds of the domain so there is a move, for example, from representational art to abstract art'. (The examples of children's work presented later in this article show that they worked directly with abstract ideas. It was not necessary to move from representation to abstraction). In addition Guy Claxton makes a distinction between allowing children to be creative, and *developing* creativity. In the same article he talks about the need to develop the small seeds, the details or particular ways in which things combine or appear, as for instance in some of these examples, the children have picked up on the particular quality of the materials, their rigidity or flexibility, the way the crayon works on top of texture, layering, combinations of drawing, colouring and collage, the use of a template to draw around and repeat a shape. All these are small things that accumulatively can create an entire set of work that is unique to that child, and also give other children ideas of how to use materials."(October 2007)

At the end of the article we wrote the following summary of the position of the project so far: 'This article describes the result of the pilot project in one of the Derby Primary Schools. The project continued throughout 2006-7 and was extended through the summer holidays by giving some of the children notebooks to collect things in, and make drawings or additions whenever they wished. The results from the project as a whole have yet to be fully assessed, and changes were made at regular intervals in terms of the class group, and the materials provided. The results reported in this article were not repeated in all cases, and we have yet to fully understand what the reasons were for these differences. However the discussions that have taken place to analyze and comprehend the differences have been very significant and as important as those which have attempted to understand why this group in particular were able to use the materials so immediately, spontaneously and effectively.'

On returning in September 2006 both teachers were with new groups and were engaged primarily with settling them in for the first half of the new term. The arrangements continued as before with the materials being available in the same way at Dale (for those children who wished to work with them in the afternoon each day) and at St. James (at lunchtimes and on Friday afternoons).

However by February 2007 the new groups had not made very much with the materials provided and at Dale we decided to focus on observing three children in particular: one with significant language delay and special needs, a second from a Somali refugee family, and a third child who was rather unpredictable. We also decided to stimulate 3D experimentation by supplying modular cardboard units from the recycling centre which could open out and had a locking system, but were made entirely of cardboard. We also increased the supply of 2D images for them to add to, cut out etc.

At St. James the project had got underway, and more boys were doing it now but making things that they then undid or changed. They were not interested in keeping the things they made or putting them anywhere permanent. Dan felt very strongly that he should not intervene in any way, and the sessions were very short at lunchtime for half an hour. On the Friday there was one group selected by him who would work with the materials freely, while the rest worked on a specific (and heavily prescribed) project. I attended a session when I sat with, and assisted (but only when asked) the 'free' group, while the rest of the class was run by two teaching assistants as Dan went with the swimming group to the Baths on Friday afternoons. The rest of the class was engaged in printing with already made stencils.

There were a range of strategies evident in the group I was with, some of which were very independent and goal oriented (a girl who wanted to make a puppet) and others much more experimental. One small Chinese boy spent a lot of time demanding others and myself hold cardboard tubes of different sizes while he 'shot' a smaller tube through those that had been lined up. This was not attention seeking behaviour but was demanding, and it was also very much in the nature of a physics experiment to do with trajectory and velocity. Later he became intensely engaged in the fitting together of differently shaped cut pieces of paper of a particular texture selected from the range on offer, to cover the flat surfaces of a cardboard spool. This was quite large, the top and bottom having a diameter of about 18cm. He glued them onto the surfaces rather like marquetry, making sure that they fitted exactly, and took a great deal of trouble trimming the edges with scissors, so that the circular edge remained perfect. He was so determined to complete this task that he refused to stop even after his mother came to pick him up at the end of the afternoon, and we all waited for him to finish.

This extraordinary encounter made me acutely aware of the cross-overs that are an essential part of the creative process and of the process of understanding through experimentation. These aspects of the project were rapidly recognised by the teachers involved, and the methodology became transferred into literature as well as science. (the 'Write to Excite' project that became adopted throughout Dale at Key Stage 1).

However by June when I met again with Claire at Dale it was evident that this year the group had not responded in the way they had the previous year, and the three children we were going to focus on had not produced anything of real interest. In the previous year Claire worked in a different way with the class. She would work with one group at a time, whilst others did 'holding' activities (dot to dot, colouring in). This year she had not done this. The children were given differentiated activities (differentiated to their ability) but working on the same project or area of the curriculum. Therefore it had been more formal for example, using QCA Art Materials (from the QCA website). The question we asked was " Is it a result of this formalisation of learning that the children are unable to be autonomous, or is it their age? This group is 18 months younger than the previous group at the time they were so productive. Last year's group 'made it their own' Claire said, whereas with the second group it was not seen as anything 'special'. There was also a different set of personalities in the group last year, with most of the girls being confident and independent, as well as more interesting characters in the class as a whole. A lot of the girls in this year's group have self-esteem issues, and groups of three are predominant which makes independence problematic.

Her summary of what the project and the work by Creative Partnerships in the school had accomplished, was that it had drawn out the strengths of those teachers with ideas, and confirmed their beliefs about pedagogy. It confirmed for her the importance of experimentation, learning through mistakes and testing materials. She also felt that it was necessary to give three years to fully understand a change in teaching methods. This is I think the most significant statement to set down as part of this report. Clearly in both cases at St.James and at Dale, the circumstances changed in very significant ways with the different cohorts, as well as different methods of classroom organisation and teaching methods. It was disappointing and surprising that we were unable to create a situation in which that highly productive and informative period was able to recur, but it made the fact that it did all the more remarkable.

One of the most important and exciting results of the project for me was the links that became evident with the other Creative Partnerships initiatives that were occurring previously to and during the span of time in which the project took place. This was the work done by MUF on the aesthetics and function of the space of the school, and the culmination of all this experimental work in the visit to Pistoia in February 2009. I have written a lengthy account of the visit from my perspective for the website that I have just completed as an online publication/ exhibition about the entire project so there is little point in reproducing that here. (See <http://www.whatchildrenmakeofthings.co.uk>) However it is worth referring to certain of the observations I made and the conclusions I came to about their principles and methods as they relate to the aims of my project. It is of particular interest to me because of the strength of the links with fine art practice and practitioners, linking it very directly with the aims of my doctorate for which the research has been so vital. I therefore think it is useful to quote the following:

'Each centre or school has a particular emphasis, and has strong links with the location, the environment and the city. It is very important to know that the influence of the 'Arte Povera' movement, which developed in northern Italy, Tuscany and particularly in Turin remains very strong, and extends beyond the city museums and galleries. The movement was anti-consumerism, and strongly socialist, and used common, poor and everyday materials to construct both simple and complex structures, which often used space as an integral element in their work. Artists Anselmo, Boetti, Calzolari, Fabro, Gilardi, Kounellis, Marion & Maris Merz, Paolini, Pascali, Penone, Pistoletto, Prini & Zorio were represented in the 'Zero to Infinity' exhibition at Tate Modern, which then travelled to the Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C. between May 2001 and January 2003. .

One of the schools is named after an earlier artist born in Pistoia, Marino Marini, a contemporary (and eventually a friend) of Henry Moore, who came to prominence in 1948 with major exhibitions in Milan, New York and Munich. His work referenced the early Etruscan culture, which is celebrated in the many collections of archaeological examples across Tuscany: his work which includes riders, figures, portraits, horses, in plaster and bronze, adopt their simplified and archaic forms.



The choice, handling, qualities and combinations of materials are dominant factors in the practice of these artists, and in the pedagogy of the schools. The 'atelier' principle of the classroom as a space in which to experiment, invent and play with materials and ideas, as well as to observe, analyze and reflect lies at the heart of the structure of these schools and centres. This principle applies equally to scientific studies, with their emphasis on workshops, taxonomy, observation and technical experimentation with materials and tools

The workshop held a wide range of hand tools, as well as machine tools all of which the children used with supervision from their teachers. The amount of three-dimensional construction evident was remarkable, and was often provisional in a 'Heath Robinson' kind of way, the ideas for fly traps for example that we were shown (illustrated). This is of particular interest taking into account the observations of teachers during an 'action research project' conducted by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, commissioned and supported by Creative Partnerships London South and CfBT Action Zone -Brixton and North Lambeth. "The teachers were shocked at the children's general 'lack of skill in basic craft techniques such as cutting and sticking. It was observable that many children were inexperienced in, as one arts partner described it '*the rhythm of making things*'."

"Teachers and arts partners did not always take children's inexperience into consideration when planning. Two partnerships realised that children needed extended time to play and practise with materials and techniques before attempting to make a piece of artwork" ('Many Routes to Meanings', Kimberly Safford & Myra Barrs, Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, 2005)

The last sentence of this quotation is particularly interesting, because it reveals a fundamental difference in pedagogy, in its emphasis of making 'a piece of artwork'. During our visit, we did not see children making 'pieces of artwork', but exploring ideas, experimenting, observing and reflecting. The 'artworks' were a by-product of the exploration of a theme or an idea, and could easily be scientific or literary or mathematical or dramatic. What is revealed here is a fundamental difference, which can be put simply: in Pistoia the emphasis is on the process, whilst in the UK the emphasis seems still to be much more on the product. This emphasis was illustrated in all the schools by the content and structure of the design of the displays, which communicated the work of the school or centre to visitors, parents, teachers and the children themselves.

Most importantly in relation to my own research, the range and type of materials used were 'povera' - poor materials transformed, found objects, plants, old electrical cables, wire, typewriters, machinery, natural forms, sieves, graters, whisks, tools of all kinds, implements, soil, gravel, pebbles, branches lopped from trees, husks, seeds, plants, leaves, nests, buttons, beads, twigs, threads etc. which provide a n enormous range of sensory stimulus. Also of fundamental importance was the care and thought given to the child's *autonomy* and *integrity* - fundamentally, the respect given to the child (the child here is in no way 'a blank slate').

The imagination is given a major role whether through story-telling and play, or visual imagery, movement and group activities like that we observed (see notes on class observation), so much so that at Filostrocca it determined the structure and lay-out of the school. Integration is evident across subject areas, teams, teaching methods, and learning; and there is a striking lack of hierarchy - teams work as equals, and the strengths of the teams are reflected in their determining the different kinds of emphasis in the schools or centres."

The effect of the visit to Pistoia, and the cumulative effect of the different projects initiated by Creative Partnerships at Dale is still in a process of assimilation and application through various strategies that have been developed directly as a consequence. Through the dynamic leadership of the head teacher they are taking place in ways which affect all aspects of organisation and delivery of the curriculum, and the class and school environment. The school together with the other schools that participated in the trip, has been engaged in radical appraisal and re-organisation, and is engaged in a continuing development of pedagogy with Myra Barrs facilitated by Paula Moss. The project took place during an exciting period at Dale, which I know is continuing and I feel very fortunate to have been part of it.

VW/21/07/2009

## APPENDIX 4

*'ART WITHOUT PRESCRIPTION'*  
*TEACHING THINKING & CREATIVITY VOL.8.3*



Veronica West investigates the possibilities for young children to discover their intentions in the process of making something rather than having the intentions prescribed by a teacher or a task

# Art without prescription

There are fundamental assumptions underlying the approach of the National Curriculum to learning in *art and design*, which deserve to be questioned. Despite the claims made by QCA in its aims and purposes at key stages 1 and 2, to 'stimulate children's creativity and imagination by providing visual, tactile and sensory experiences and a unique way of understanding and responding to the world' and to 'develop children's understanding of colour, form, texture, pattern and their ability to use materials and processes to communicate ideas, feeling and meanings', the guidance on structuring the curriculum and the learning materials provided appear to contradict them.

The guidance reveals a remarkable ambition that, it is claimed, can be delivered within extraordinary constraints. Close examination of the teaching activities as laid out in each of the Units for example at key stages 1–2 shows that they are entirely dominated by language. The first stage, *Developing Ideas* is presented as occurring entirely through verbal or written communication. The second part, *Investigating and Making*, which is conducted through a highly prescriptive series of activities is then followed by *Evaluating and Developing Work* which is also conducted through verbal and written communication. *Display* is included as a 'point to note' but not as an outcome. This structure and emphasis on spoken and written language reveals not only assumptions about the way that art happens, but also about the nature of learning in *art and design*. The importance of literacy in the development

and understanding of ideas is considerable, and children should be encouraged to talk about what they are doing with one another and their teacher, but the emphasis on it at key stages 1 and 2 appears to outweigh the learning that can occur through the exploration of materials and processes. 'Visual, tactile and sensory experiences' are essential to that learning.

By dividing subjects up and then allocating them differing priorities, the national curriculum creates artificial boundaries and complex burdensome structures that act as barriers to learning and thinking. For example, the time devoted to written and spoken English (75% of a unit) is not counted as 'literacy'. Unit 3B involves ICT but this not included under the ICT 'quota'. Potentially, much of what children explore in *art and design* relates to, and in fact employs, knowledge fundamental to mathematics and science – for example awareness of shape, size, scale, rotation, distribution, weight, balance, structure and experimentation with materials. Despite this the following is the case:

1. Very little time (4%) is given to *art and design* in the curriculum (75% of which is conducted through spoken or written English), less in fact than religious education (5%) compared with English (21–32%) and mathematics (18–21%)
2. CDT (4%) and ICT (4%) are separated out rather than integrated across areas as methodologies. Whilst



the guidance does give examples of integration, the dominant pattern presented is that they are taught separately.

3. There is little time or place in current methodology for the child to use and develop an intuitive response to materials, in other words to 'play' with materials without there being a defined outcome.

In other words, the model of learning for *art and design* is dominated by written and spoken language. It is also highly prescriptive and outcome driven. The concept underlying this model is still that the child is an 'empty vessel' or a 'blank slate'. The child is not given any time to discover for herself those things that we consider she ought to know.

### A non-prescriptive model

In this article I shall describe an approach to learning that could be used in the teaching of *art and design* at primary level. It provides children with the opportunity to be inventive with materials and to make something for themselves. It also gives teachers an opportunity to discover what children know and how they see things. It provides a means of observing children's ways of thinking and solving problems for themselves, rather than testing their ability to copy the model provided.

Presenting a predefined model for imitation is prescriptive. The approach I offer is not. Steve Williams, the editor, asked me why it was so important that it was not prescriptive, and I said 'so that the child is given the opportunity to *discover their intention in the process of making something*.' He made me pursue this thought further, and asked why that was important. I said '*because the child realises (or brings about) the meaning*'. In other words, in the case of a prescriptive methodology, if the child is shown what to do, and sees the result, with the clear aim being to produce that kind of thing, this realisation is denied, there is no discovery, no invention, and most importantly *it has no specific meaning or relevance for the child*.

In Steve's interview with Guy Claxton (*Teaching Thinking & Creativity*, Winter 2004) Claxton refers to the work of Margaret Boden of the University of Sussex, and what she describes as 'transformational creativity', which requires a questioning approach to situations and materials, a 'what if' way of thinking 'which pushes the bounds of the domain so there is a move, for example, from representational art to abstract art'. (The examples of children's work presented later in this article show that they worked directly with abstract ideas. It was not necessary to move from representations to abstraction.) In addition Guy Claxton makes a distinction between allowing children to be

creative, and *developing* creativity. In the same article he talks about the need to develop the small seeds, the details or particular ways in which things combine or appear. (In the examples shown later we see that children can pick up on the particular quality of the materials, their rigidity or flexibility; the way the crayon works on top of texture; layering; combinations of drawing, colouring and collage; the use of a template to draw around and repeat a shape.) All these are small things that can create, accumulatively, an entire set of work that is unique to that child, and also give other children ideas of how to use materials).

I hope that in this article I can give an idea of how it is possible to allow children to be creative and also to develop creativity. The following is a description of what resulted from a project to test out what would happen, if children between Key Stages 1 and 2 could do whatever they wanted with a range of materials provided, and were given no task instructions or guidance beforehand.

### Observing children

In the nineteen eighties I had studied what my own children made, in two and three dimensions, with found material during their pre-school and early school years. They sometimes used images from magazines, objects that they found around the house and in the garden, or materials not usually considered to be 'art' materials at all. I was continually surprised by the way they would use things and combine things together. In some cases I was astonished at the way they seemed to be able to communicate ideas visually at a much higher level than was supposed to be possible at that age. I am now continuing this study for a PhD at Staffordshire University.

In April 2006 I was awarded funding by *Creative Partnerships* in Derby, to initiate a project to be delivered in two Primary Schools. We called the project 'How do children see things: what do they make of them?'. Its aim was to observe children's spontaneous interaction with found images and objects. The project was undertaken in consultation with my PhD supervisor Dr. Douglas Burnham and with Caroline Barth and Paula Moss of *Creative Partnerships* Derby.

### Pilot projects

Between May and July of 2006, I carried out pilot projects in two schools. This article presents results from one of the schools. Children in the schools were simply provided with materials which they could alter, add to, embellish or use in whatever way they liked. There was no compulsion or requirement for them to make anything or, if they did, for it to remain unchanged and 'finished'. The aim was to discover how they saw the material and how they



responded to it without having been given a specific aim or task. The key criteria for the pilots were the following:

1. The teacher must not direct the child in any way
2. The child must choose to use the materials
3. There is no demand to complete on the children to complete a 'piece of work'
4. No aim or purpose is given for the activity
5. A sense of normality is developed *ie* the project is not treated as 'special'
6. The children become used to the the materials being regularly available
7. There is a guaranteed amount of time given to it whenever it occurs

Discussions took place in order to set up the projects with the head teachers of both schools, the creative agent for Creative Partnerships and the teachers who would be involved. It was important that the project could run in such a way that it was 'normalised' and part of the children's everyday experience. It would not be an exceptional 'event' in which special things would happen. It was important that teachers were interested in the project and felt able to make it their own. It should not feel like it was something they were doing under duress. It was also important that teachers sympathised with the purpose of the project which, in certain respects, went against the demands usually made upon them to be in control and to achieve specific targets within the national curriculum. The main challenge for the teacher was to organise the class so as to allow children the freedom to choose how to work with the materials. Once this was achieved, the teacher monitored and observed what occurred rather than controlling it.

### Organising play

Materials were provided in boxes bought especially and comprised a range of papers of different weights, colours and textures (some embossed and some hand-made); a range of different surfaces (for example wooden veneers, a thick rubbery material, artificial fleece, corrugated card, strips of wood, ribbon, metallic papers); a mixture of found images (postcards, newspaper cuttings); a range of pens (coloured felt-tips, fine-liners, graphite pencils, oil pastels); and some three-dimensional objects (plastic numbers, cardboard tubes, strips of wood)

In one of the schools, the project was integrated into the school day (every afternoon) and the children produced a lot of material in a very short time. It is work from this school that I have used as examples. The children were in year 3 of an inner city primary school that had been working with *Creative Partnerships* since January 2005. This pilot project

started after the Whitsun break and had only been going for two weeks when I visited and saw that Clare Fitzgerald, the teacher, had given children the power to choose when they would work with the materials. On this particular afternoon, about a quarter of the class had made that choice. Clare and I discussed the results after the children had gone home and she summarised her observations in the following main points:

1. The children take up the opportunity to work with the materials mostly in the afternoon
2. They feel very possessive of it
3. The information gained from observation is already very interesting, and surprising
4. Unexpected children are coming up with the most interesting things (most children in the class had been achieving at below the national average).
6. The higher-achieving children, academically, are making more conventional things

### Observations

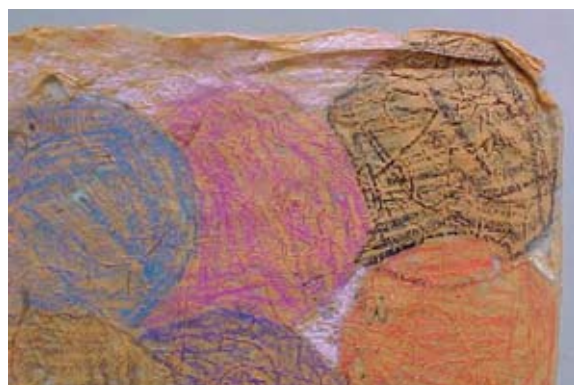
The examples of the children's work with materials included here demonstrate a range of genres and also the interests of the children. Their work, in two and three dimensions, reveals their concerns and their cultures as well as their inventiveness, wit, and an understanding of abstract and formal qualities of colour, shape, composition, texture and mark.

Clare was excited by a link with science as a result of one of the first things that one of the children made. (Figure 1) She had chosen to work with oil pastels on a rubbery piece of material, which was already cut into a long oblong shape. On one side she had layered colours in a series of stripes in a sequence which whilst not accurate was rainbow-like (Figure 2).

What struck me on seeing this was the way each stripe was made of colours which were overlaid to create a complex and subtle mix. On the other side, the child drew a picture of a rainbow (Figure 3). When Clare asked her why she chose that material she said: 'Because it's flexible' and demonstrated by curving it into the shape of a rainbow (Figure 4). Her choice of this term 'flexible' was unusual for her age and level of ability. This became a very significant event for the teacher who told me that it made her realise that this process of making could inform her of children's levels of understanding.

The children demonstrated a keen awareness of the qualities of materials; they chose materials for their specific qualities. There were able to talk about specific properties like 'flexibility'. They also seemed drawn towards materials with qualities we might label as 'fragility' and 'texture'.

There were two examples of a delicate textured tissue – so delicate it had torn slightly – being chosen as a surface upon which to draw and colour by one girl in a series of overlapping circles. These were perfect circles of the same size made by a template (a lid or circular object). What was particularly interesting was that she did not draw them in a regular or simply repetitive way, but over-lapped them in a complex sequence which she must have worked out as she went along (Figures 5 and 6).

**Figure 1****Figure 4****Figure 2****Figure 5****Figure 3****Figure 6**

One boy made two pieces of work, both textured, on kitchen roll and wallpaper. One was quite free, the other very subtle, layered and controlled with a sequence of colours laid on in bands of pale blue, green, yellow and pink, with two different browns (one lighter, one darker) in lines, like a check, over the top – very geometric at right-angles. This boy had arrived at the school eighteen months earlier, and for some time was unable to make a mark on paper. He would clearly be distressed if he thought this was required of him. Over the intervening time he had gradually started to write and draw but Clare was very surprised to discover that this was his work (Figures 7 and 8). It was interesting to see that boys were interested in the texture and the delicacy of materials and responded to them in ways that were extremely sensitive (Figures 9, 10 and 11).



Figure 9

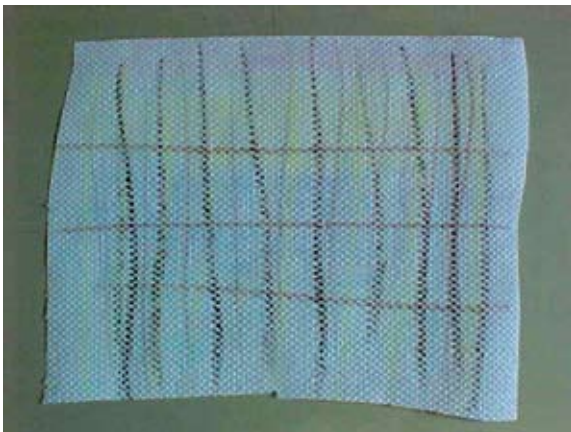


Figure 7



Figure 10



Figure 8



Figure 11



There was evidence of different 'motives' or intentions in the range of work produced. This I found fascinating as it mirrored the work of my own children when they were young. For example, there were:

- Purely abstract explorations of form, colour and texture (Figures 12 to 15)
- 'Portraits' (Figures 16 and 17)
- 'Letters', often these were intimate or confidential letters to the teacher, or to other children in the class. The letters were often works of reparation, made as an apology or as gifts to make up for bad behaviour; or they were thank you letters, or letters asking favours of other children, and many were letters of appreciation to the teacher (Figures 18 and 19).



Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 14



Figure 18

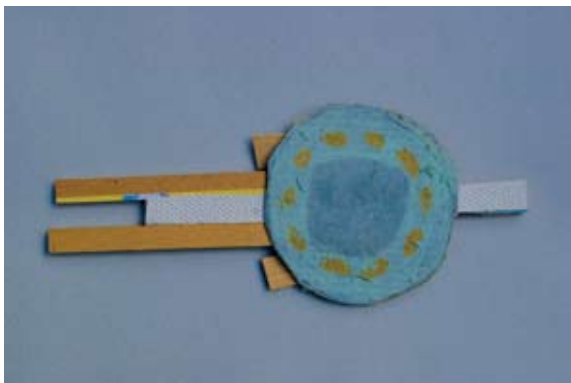


Figure 15

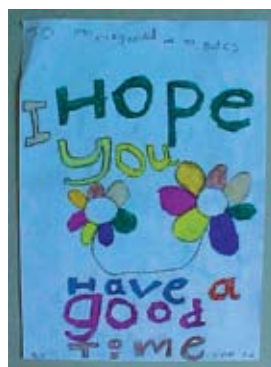


Figure 19

### Envelopes

There were some very striking combinations of two and three dimensions, with flaps or envelopes being used that explored hidden images (Figures 20 to 23). The gold envelope is drawn on the back (very delicately so it is barely visible). It is partly visible and partly hidden under the flap, to make a complete image when it is opened up. This was also an example of a piece that was taken so far, left for a while and then returned to (with the addition of eyelashes). We did not know if the same child returned to it, or another picked it up, but if the latter, the 'aim' remained unchanged in that the whole image (and therefore the meaning of the image) was not revealed until you lifted the flap. In this respect it followed the principle of the envelope as a container that hides the contents until the letter is opened.

### The crane and the world cup

One very striking piece was unusual in that it was 3D and ingeniously constructed (Figures 24 to 27). Initially the teacher and I interpreted it differently from what was intended. This was an example of group collaboration, with

the boys returning to it three times to complete it, using a variety of different objects and materials with different qualities. The children told Clare, when she asked them, that their object was a crane. She became aware that using this approach to making revealed and exhibited the level of skill the children had in a way that formal instruction using prescriptive methods could not. She had given the class instruction in methods of joining as part of a CDT project earlier in the term. The boys' own crane used a variety of more complex and sophisticated methods than those she had shown them. Now, she told me, she would not show them the methods in the first place, but would see how they went about solving the problem in their own way. By this means she would have a better sense of what the children knew already.

The children also responded to current events, especially the World Cup that was going on throughout this time. Two of the girls made some very carefully-composed images using flags and different found materials. Some of these were juxtaposed with imported materials from India and shapes made by drawing around plastic numerals (Figures 28 and 29).



Figure 20

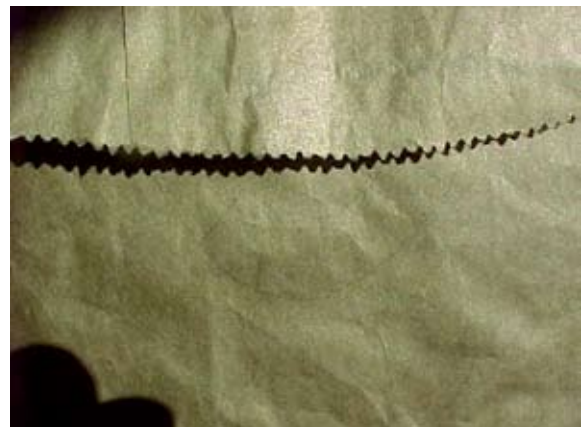


Figure 22



Figure 21



Figure 23



### The non-prescriptive model in practice

Clare recognised the need for the children to return to what they were doing so they could continue their activities and so she provided them with a box for their unfinished pieces. This was her initiative. It demonstrated her recognition of the children's need to have the freedom and autonomy to be in charge of the pace of work. Further important observations she made involved the children's attitudes and behaviour during the time they were working with the materials:

1. Whatever their ability, it keeps them occupied for as much time as you will give them.
2. They never get bored.
3. There are no behaviour problems amongst the group whilst engaged.
4. There are no arguments.
5. They never say they have finished.
6. They know it goes in a 'special' box to keep it.
7. They take out, they tidy up and put away.

When the project was tested out in a different way during the following year these observations were repeated by the teacher at the second school. He was just as surprised at the way in which the children collaborated, negotiated, and managed to share resources without any arguments.

One potential advantage of this methodology therefore is that it changes the classroom dynamic and facilitates the formation of exploratory groups in the class. In this respect it reflects much contemporary practice in both fine art and design. Collaboration is, indeed, an essential aspect of scientific enquiry, architecture and engineering as well as art and design.

In the observations I made of the children working with materials in this open-ended way, I saw all sorts of encouragement and support occurring, whether it was simply helping to hold something while another part was attached, passing materials over, making a joint piece or just simply seeing how others went about making in a very different way. In the 'genre' or 'copy' methodologies there is less scope for the children to 'find' each other. Highly prescriptive methods can also create a fear factor that is often felt by children who want to be sure they are



Figure 24



Figure 26



Figure 25



Figure 27

Figure 28



Figure 29



'doing it properly', and seek approval at the expense of the risk-taking which is so fundamental to any creative or inventive process.

In all the examples given, the children used materials in ways that revealed a sensitivity and awareness of the nature of the materials – how to use them or work on them. Children *saw* the materials *as something* and as having specific associations for them. Their response could be symbolic, representational or abstract and often reflected the mixed culture in which they lived.

The purpose of the project was to gather more information on the way in which children see things and what they make of them. We wanted to explore how children see things *as something* and how these 'somethings' may be further transformed in the process of making.

## Conclusion

The project proved for me that children see things *as something* very quickly, without inhibition or fear, if they are given the opportunity, and that they are able to make something out of materials in ways that can be surprising. In this respect the project, in a short period of time, proved to be very informative. The project undoubtedly benefited from the fact that the teacher who implemented it embraced its underlying principles. She had the experience and the confidence to bring an organisation and clarity to the methodology, which gave the children the time, space and autonomy to engage in it on a daily basis. She recognised the value of the experiment and introduced the same principle to writing. The resulting *Write to Excite* project became so successful that it was later adopted throughout the school at Key Stage 1.

The non-prescriptive, exploratory model described in this article may seem at first to contradict the ways in which teachers are expected to 'deliver' *art and design* in the national curriculum. Yet in my view, it has proved better able to deliver the official aims of the subject:

*'to stimulate children's creativity and imagination by providing visual, tactile and sensory experiences and a unique way of understanding and responding to the world' and 'to develop children's understanding of colour, form, texture, pattern and their ability to use materials and processes to communicate ideas, feelings and meanings'.*

Most importantly of all, the children discovered the things they made from the materials for themselves, it was *their* way of understanding and responding to the world.

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## Pause for thought

This article describes the result of the pilot project in one of the two Derby Primary Schools. The project continued throughout 2006–7 and was extended through the summer holidays by giving some of the children notebooks in which to collect things, and to make drawings or additions whenever they wished. The results from the project as a whole have yet to be fully assessed including the impact of the changes, made at regular intervals, to the class groupings and the materials provided.

The results reported in this article were not repeated in all schools or with another class in the same school the following year. We have yet to fully understand the reasons for these differences but feel that further enquiry will be important in order to establish why this group in particular were able to use the materials so immediately, spontaneously and effectively.

## APPENDIX 5

### *ARCHITECTURE, SPACE & PEDAGOGY IN PISTOIA*

A paper presented at 'Creative Engagements CE8: Thinking with Children', Oxford  
July 2012

# Architecture, Space and Pedagogy in Pistoia: The Integration of Space, Design and the Learning Process

*Veronica West*

## **Abstract**

The paper will report on a visit to Pistoia, Northern Italy in February 2008, with teachers and practitioners from Derby. We went to observe the architectural space, organisation and pedagogy in the 'nidi' scuole materne and aree bambini. I was conducting a research project in two Derby primary schools into ways in which children respond to everyday and found materials, and use them in processes of making they devise for themselves. Spaces are structured in Pistoia for children to experiment, invent and play with materials, as well as to observe, analyse and reflect. The influence of the 'Arte Povera' movement, from Tuscany and particularly Turin, remains very strong. The movement was anti-consumerism, and strongly socialist, using common, poor and everyday materials to construct both simple and complex structures, and used space as an integral element in their work. The amount of three-dimensional construction we observed was remarkable. In this country, an action research project' conducted by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, reported: 'The teachers were shocked at the children's general 'lack of skill in basic craft techniques such as cutting and sticking. It was observable that many children were inexperienced in, as one arts partner described it "the rhythm of making things"'.<sup>1</sup> In Pistoia the children are given the opportunity to determine the selection of a topic for learning, and this is pursued in an inter-disciplinary fashion over a considerable time. It is an emergent curriculum in which 'filo conduttore' (lines of research) are pursued for as long as they bear fruit. They could be described as the optimal conditions for the flow state to occur.<sup>2</sup>

**Key Words:** Architecture, space, pedagogy, Pistoia, Arte Povera, Reggio Emilio, 'filo conduttore', material.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Introduction**

The visit to Pistoia was arranged by Creative Partnerships<sup>3</sup> with teachers and head teachers from a cluster of Derby primary schools and one nursery school, all located within a mile of each other in one area of the inner city. I was invited because of the project I was conducting in one of the schools with Creative Partnerships and Staffordshire University as part of my doctoral research.<sup>4</sup> The visit was also directly related to the work that had been done in one of the schools (Dale) by 'muf'<sup>5</sup> a collaborative practice of

artists and architects commissioned through Creative Partnerships and the school to find creative solutions and alternatives to the way in which space was used in Dale, and the aesthetics of the school environment.



The Baptistery, Piazza del Duomo, Pistoia (V. West)

Our guide and translator was Myra Barrs an eminent educationalist, editor and writer on children's creativity and literacy, who has developed a strong relationship with those responsible for the philosophy, pedagogy, management and teaching in all the schools of the commune at this level. Pistoia is a modern city at the centre of which is the carefully conserved Piazza del Duomo, around which are the Cathedral, the octagonal Baptistry, the Campanile, and the Palazzo del Comune. The city website declares itself to be a child-friendly city, where the space of the city is 'at the service of children and constitutes a resource for their education. All citizens are responsible for them.' The way in which the space of the city is used in the pedagogy and the architecture of one school in particular will be shown in more detail later.

My aim in this paper is to describe the nature of the space in the buildings and the way in which the environment is structured, and how this both reflects the philosophy underlying the pedagogy throughout the centres and influences in a profound way the nature of the learning process.

There are three types of teaching centres: 'nidi' meaning 'nests' for children from 3 months to 3 years; scuole materne or nurseries for children between 3 - 6 years; and aree bambini or centres for learning which provide workshops, locations for meetings and courses for teachers, parents and children from all the city schools, and which have particular specialisms: art, environmental science, story-telling and drama.

Each centre or school has a particular emphasis, and has strong links with the location, the environment and the city. The architecture of the schools is modern and open, with large windows and therefore very good light,



courtyard spaces, clear, often very wide and open corridors and hallways. The most striking impression and one that affected all of us immediately, was the clarity of the space and the light. The walls are dominantly white, and the displays have a common aesthetic which is spare and carefully composed. There is a designer who works with the teaching teams to create what are in effect posters of the processes that the children engage in. They are used as teaching aids, as a means of communicating the work of the school to the parents and the visitor, and they are the product of a reflection on and evaluation of the process by the teachers with the designer.



The entrance lobby of Scuola 'Marino Marini' (V. West)

There is a striking similarity in the architectural structure of the space in these buildings with the description given by Malaguzzi in a conversation with Gardini about the design of schools in Reggio Emilia.<sup>6</sup> In addition, colour is used in bold and vibrant ways, with an understanding of colour relations, contrasts and harmonies. This is combined with the use throughout all the schools, of natural materials open to view and to access, and reclaimed furniture.



Colour and organisation of space at Scuola 'Marino Marini' (V. West)



Refectory at 'Marino Marini' (V. West)

All the schools have particular emphases based on the abilities and interests of their teaching teams. The role and the importance of the imagination, is

most vividly represented at Scuola dell'Infanzia La Filastrocca, where the space is designed in a way that embodies elements of a particular tale (the name 'Filastrocca' means 'nursery rhyme'). The name was the product of an assembly, with a wizard as the symbol chosen by the children. They have performances in the square in the ancient centre of the city: the wizard 'occupies' the Piazza del Duomo, and the witch 'lives' in the Campanile (the Bell Tower). The wizard is 'responsible' for the rainbow and this provides a motif and a structure in different parts of the school (classrooms, corridors, library shelves and cataloguing system). The story also provided the structure of part of the space in the new library which has a 'bell tower' and 'bridge' across to a 'palace', as well as the 'wizard's tunnel' between the inside and the outside of the school (I noted also the mirror glass set into the little square window in the high room in the 'palace' which reflects the courtyard into the room).



The library 'Filastrocca' (V. West)

In another room, we witnessed the use of a projected number 4 to trigger a series of imaginative interpretations, which soon developed into an elaborate story involving pirates, treasure, a cat, a flag, a lifeboat, and a little girl becoming a cat creeping across the floor in a cat-like fashion.<sup>7</sup> 'The team plan the curriculum every Monday for two to three hours: it is very much an emergent curriculum, but with shared intentionality.' It's a very fluid, dynamic process with a modular structure: projects change but the structure remains the same. It's really action research'.<sup>8</sup>





Looking out of the window in the room of the 'Palace' at 'Filostrocca' (V. West)



The room in the 'Palace' at 'Filostrocca' (V. West)

### **The Influence of Arte Povera**

The manner in which all the schools use materials, and the types of materials they use, as well as the extraordinary level of accessibility the children have to them, is one of the most significant and distinctive characteristics of the schools. They used the term 'povera', as many of them are poor, everyday, common and discarded materials. The influence of the 'Arte Povera'<sup>9</sup> movement, which developed in northern Italy, Tuscany and particularly in Turin seems to remain very strong, and extends beyond the city museums and galleries. The movement had no clear ideology or political affinity but it was very much against the commodification of art, and in terms of the freedom of ideas it was anarchic, and used common, poor and everyday materials in which to embody often ambiguous and enigmatic works. It included Anselmo, Boetti, Calzolari, Fabro, Gilardi, Kounellis, Marion & Maris Merz, Paolini, Pascali, Penone, Pistoletto, Prini and Zorio. They made work that challenged the conventional way in which artworks related to the space in which they were situated. In her essay 'Reading Arte Povera', Corinna Criticos points out the influence of John Dewey (1859-1952) on Italian cultural life during the 1960s, as well as that of phenomenology through the work of Merleau-Ponty and Husserl through Umberto Eco's book 'Opera Aperta' (The Open Work) and the article "Del modo di formare come impegno sulla realta" (Form as social commitment), both published in 1962.<sup>10</sup>

The notion of play underlies this work, an inspiration that was also important in the work of Pascali and Boetti' ...Unlike Zorio's Torcia, which reenacted a negative infantile impulse, Boetti's work enacts the constructive, orderly impulse of the child who seeks to apprehend the world. Forms involving piling, sorting, or classifying were common in his work from the start. They constitute some of the most essential human gestures<sup>11</sup>

Works overstepped the boundary of the gallery and entered the street, (Pistoletto, Anselmo, Calzolari, Paolini), or the landscape, (Penone) where the effect of the elements was included in the structure of the work. Pistoletto's theatre company 'Zoo' created performance that was taken out onto the street, at a time (1968) of major political unrest world-wide, student occupations and demonstrations<sup>12</sup>. The point I want to make here is that the philosophy and pedagogy of these schools has I believe at its root, strong links with the emphasis on experience, bodily and social interaction with the world these artists felt they needed to reclaim from any kind of external control, whether from the state or from 'culture' (ie those in control of the cultural economy).



The emphasis on the child's autonomy; the belief in a 'slow pedagogy', following a line of enquiry 'filo conduttore' determined by the children themselves; the lack of hierarchies (there are no head teachers); the way learning takes place in groups formed across age groups; the absence of assessment (this is replaced by documentation of group work the child has been involved in): all add up to what can be seen as a radical position in relation to not only the way in which we view the child and their education in the UK, but also to that in Italy itself. In the state run elementary schools it is expected the children will work in a 'scholastic' way:

There is a problem about formal learning. The most important thing would be to concentrate on the children's way into the learning culture. They don't start with what the children already know. We have to construct the learning together. Also the quality of the learning environment is really important. The restrictions on sitting or moving around are unnecessary. Schools should be more like workshops, laboratories: there should be more group work, and less emphasis on the individual child. In the Elementary schools the teachers feel very alone, they are weakened and have a low opinion of their own status, whereas what is needed are strong teachers, energetic with a strong role. You lose a lot of education if you think of it as *transmission*.' (Donatella Giovannini in discussion with us at the end of our visit)



Materials in classroom at 'Marino Marini' (V. West)

### **The 'Atelier' Principle and the Importance of Materials**

The 'atelier' principle of the classroom as a space in which to experiment, invent and play with materials and ideas, as well as to observe, analyze and reflect lies at the heart of both the philosophy and the structure of these schools and centres. The space they aim to set up is an empowering space, one that is both internal and external, psychological, conceptual, emotional and physical. The workshops are well equipped and clearly organized, to encourage experimentation with materials and tools, and all the schools or centres have them in one form or another, according to their specialism. Most importantly in relation to my own research, a lot of the materials they use are found and recycled: old electrical cables, wire, typewriters, machinery, natural forms, sieves, graters, whisks, tools of all kinds, implements, soil, gravel, pebbles, branches lopped from trees, husks, seeds, plants, leaves, nests, buttons, beads, twigs, threads etc. They not only provide an enormous range of sensory stimulus, they each provide their own 'world' of associations, an entire range of connections all of which have their own logic, and also have their associated affect. These 'worlds' contain their own type of space: the space of soil, is very different from the space of the whisk, but relates to the world of pebbles, and perhaps even to the electrical cable which may be embedded in it, but who knows how they might relate in the mind of the child, or the artist, and what might be conjoined with them? They are open to new connections.



Classification of objects & materials at 'Marino Marini' (V. West)

These 'worlds' and the relations between them are available to the children in the materials which are arranged clearly in open shelving, accessible, using a kind of taxonomy which is aesthetic and sensual, as much as it is based on function, material or context. These things appear ordered but as soon as they are taken off the shelf, can be ordered differently.

The 3D workshop held a wide range of hand tools, as well as machine tools all of which the children used with supervision from their teachers. The amount of three-dimensional construction evident was remarkable, and was often provisional in a 'Heath Robinson' kind of way: the ideas for fly traps for example (illustrated below). This is of particular interest taking into account the observations of teachers during an 'action research project' conducted by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, commissioned and supported by Creative Partnerships London South and CfBT Action Zone -Brixton and North Lambeth.

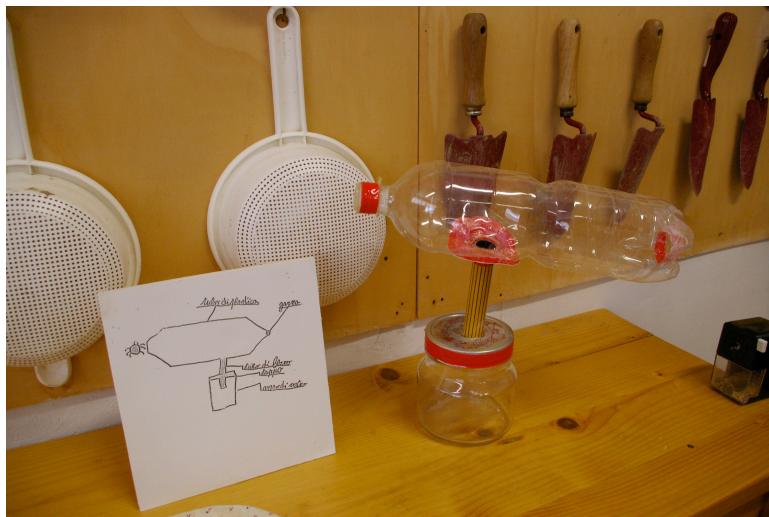
"The teachers were shocked at the children's general 'lack of skill in basic craft techniques such as cutting and sticking. It was observable that many children were inexperienced in, as one arts partner described it '*the rhythm of making things*'. Teachers and arts partners did not always take children's inexperience into consideration when planning. Two partnerships realised that children needed extended time to play and practise with materials and techniques before attempting to make a piece of artwork"<sup>13</sup>



Construction made exploring concept of 'balance' at 'Marino Marini' (V.West)



3D Workshop at 'Marino Marini' (V.West)



Experimental construction at 'Marino Marini' (V. West)

The last sentence of the previous quotation is particularly interesting, because it reveals a fundamental difference in pedagogy, in the use of the phrase 'to make a piece of artwork'. During our visit, we did not see children intentionally making 'pieces of artwork', but exploring ideas, experimenting, observing and reflecting. The 'artworks' were a by-product of the exploration of a theme or an idea, and could easily be scientific or literary or mathematical or dramatic. What is revealed here is a fundamental difference, which can be put simply: in Pistoia the emphasis is on the process, and in the UK on the product. Furthermore, there is no division between areas of the curriculum. Time is not allocated according to ideological prioritisation, but to encouraging and then maintaining a 'filo conduttore' or 'line of enquiry' which most importantly arises out of the children's own interests and curiosity. There is no labelling of this as 'art' and that of 'literacy', nor is there any testing of these as separate components.

### **Assessment**

Assessment occurs but is not put down on paper - it is shared with parents. There is no expectation to take children to a certain standard. Children can repeat a year if they fall behind, so there are ways of dealing with issues that arise. A child comes to school to find opportunities for growth, and this will depend upon their own characteristics.<sup>14</sup>



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Looking at this in relation to Gardner's theory of 'multiple intelligences' we can see that there are opportunities for each child to find their way to learn across the wide variety of approaches that are offered them, without there being any pressure or favour for one approach to dominate over another.<sup>15</sup> The recognition of differing characteristics, and the need to balance them in the formation of the groups in which they are placed, as well as the emphasis on a documentation of praxis rather than of product (testing), encourages a variety of learning styles, and the lack of prescription opens up the process to one that can be led by the interests of the children in the group. The skill of the teacher is in the balancing out of the differing interests and ideas that the children bring to the group in order to arrive at a consensus, that will be taken up with enthusiasm by all the members.

### **The Environment**

It is important to emphasize that all the schools and centres relate both *culturally and physically* to their environment. The 'Marino Marini'<sup>16</sup> is named after the artist whose work can be seen in the museum dedicated to him in the centre of Pistoia., and also houses a centre for nature studies (the Green Study Area) which is used by other members of the collective: children come in groups from other schools, to use this 'laboratory of collected items'. A large collection of different specimens is classified and presented in a very ordered way, and is made accessible to the children to use, draw and study. The emphasis is on observation of local phenomena and live animals. Close study with drawing is an essential means of recording observations. We were shown beautifully controlled and intensely observed drawings: exact, analytical and diagrammatic drawings of wild flowers by 11 year olds.

'Area Blue' is another centre that is used by a number of schools, and bases its work on the city and Gori Park.<sup>17</sup> The two resident teachers return feedback to the schools on the strategies that are effective, and the teachers who accompany the children from the nursery schools report back independently: the whole point is that they take it back into the schools. They also invite artists to work here. A work of stained glass in the centre, given by a Pistoian/American artist, had stimulated a course around the concept of transparency, evident in the range of hangings and structures that were displayed.



Assemblage at 'Area Blue' (V. West)

## Conclusions

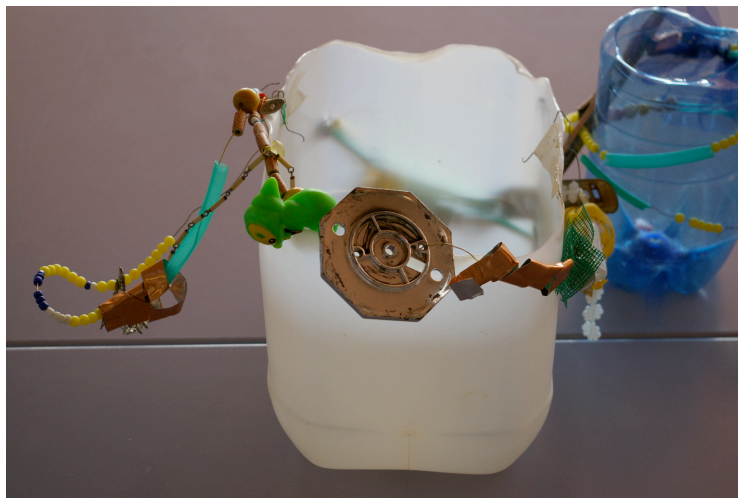
The aesthetic of the space and what is contained in it is considered to be a fundamental part of the learning process. It is not an 'add-on' or a way of making things attractive, but is a structural component in the organisation and acquisition of knowledge. The clarity and organisation of the space creates a *legible environment* through the use of dominantly white walls, simplicity, limited colour, continuity and unity. Clear displays are designed with a lot of space, that is, they are not heavily laden with text, or too many images, utilise clear fonts, and show processes of learning rather than just the products:

The commentary must be accessible without lowering expectations or tone: we've tried to make it more appealing, more attractive, more communicative. The quality is more or less the same across all the schools and centres. Documentation is *integral* as is working with parents, and this is reflected in the contract (180 hours per annum for working together) Amanda (the designer responsible for documentation and the graphic displays) joins teachers' meetings and works with them. She is not someone who visits from outside. They see it as a sort of self-evaluation, and it can be read on different levels: it is evocative, captures a moment, or traces the whole course; it values the work that it is showing, communicates the purpose of the project recorded, and is carefully edited.<sup>18</sup>

Objects and materials are classified and displayed through use of open, visible and transparent storage systems, and areas of space are provided within the classroom or workshop, or other areas, for materials and forms to be used in a variety of combinations, allowing for creative juxtapositions and imaginary structures, conceptual connections and sensory stimulus. There is a very evident understanding of colour relationships: hues are gathered together for example, or the use of the spectrum to define spaces at Filostrocca; the use of contrasts and complementaries set off against neutral earth colours and materials. The amount of handling, formation and construction with materials in three dimensions also gives them similarly a much greater awareness of the potential, possibilities and appropriateness of different methods of construction, combination, presentation and interpretation. These opportunities for phenomenological engagement with the environment, culture and materials provides the children with both a cognitive and an affective engagement essential to an understanding not just of the nature of all these things, but of the way ideas develop, and of themselves in relation to them.



Use of display and constructed object at Marino Marini. (V.West)



Object made of found materials on a table in the refectory at Marino Marini (V. West)

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Barrs M, 'The Creative Community of Pistoia' in *Teaching Thinking Vol 8:1/ Issue 22*, ed., Steve Williams (Birmingham: Imaginative Minds, 2007) 18 - 27.

<sup>2</sup> Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: Harper and Row, 1990).

<sup>3</sup> Creative agent Paula Moss organised the visit. 'Creative Partnerships' was a government initiative. Since its creation in 2002 until the end of the current phase of the programme in 2011, CP has worked with over 1 million children and over 90,000 teachers in more than 8,000 projects across over 5,000 schools in England.

<sup>4</sup> The thesis examines the creative process in the child and the adult artist particularly in relation to the perception and use of 'everyday' and found material.

<sup>5</sup> Since 1996 muf has established a reputation for innovative projects that address the social, spatial and economic infrastructures of the public realm.

<sup>6</sup> To start with, then, there is the environment. There is the entrance hall, which informs and documents, and which anticipates the form and organization of the school. This leads into the dining hall, with the kitchens well in view. The entrance hall leads into the central space, or piazza, the place of encounters, friendships, games, and other activities that complete

those of the classrooms. The classrooms and utility rooms are placed at a distance from but connected with the central area. Each classroom is divided into two contiguous rooms, picking up one of the very few practical suggestions by Piaget. His idea was to allow children to be either with teachers or stay alone: but we use the two spaces in many ways. In addition to the classrooms, we have established the 'atelier', the 'school studio', and laboratory, as a place for manipulating or experimenting with separate or combined visual languages, either in isolation or in combination with the verbal ones. We also have the 'mini-ateliers' next to each classroom, which allows for extended project work. We have a room for music and an archive, where we have placed many useful objects both large and small, and non-commercial, made by teachers and parents. Throughout the school the walls are used as spaces for both temporary and permanent exhibits of what the children and teachers have created: our walls speak and document'. Edwards, Gardini, L., & Forman, G. *The Hundred Languages of Children' - The Reggio Emilia Approach - Advanced Reflections* (New York: Ablex Publishing, 1998) 318.

<sup>7</sup> See Myra Barrs, 'The Creative Community of Pistoia' in *Teaching Thinking Vol 8:1/ Issue 22*, ed., Steve Williams (Birmingham: Imaginative Minds, 2007) 18 - 27.

<sup>8</sup> This quote is from Susan Etheredge whom we met at the school, on sabbatical from Smith College, Massachusetts, studying the work of the commune, and the group's philosophy and pedagogy.

<sup>9</sup> See Richard Flood and Frances Morris, ed., *Zero to Infinity: Arte Povera 1962-72'* (Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis 2001)

<sup>10</sup> Corrina Critico 'Reading Arte Povera' in *'Zero to Infinity: Arte Povera 1962 - 72'* ed. Richard Flood and Frances Morris (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2001) 67-88.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>12</sup> See Tommaso Trini 'Rapporto da Amalfi' (Report from Amalfi) in *Domus No 468* (Milan, November 1968) 50-51.

<sup>13</sup> Kimberly Safford and Myra Barrs. *Many Routes to Meaning*: London: Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, 2005.

<sup>14</sup> This is a quotation from our discussion with the teachers at Marino Marini during our visit.

<sup>15</sup> Howard Gardner was evidently as he put it himself 'a pianist of some seriousness', and 'could have been a successful musician'. 'I'm someone from the arts, it's in my body, and it was very surprising to me, that at least in American psychology, there is no recognition of this at all. So my contribution in psychology has been a broader view of the mind'. Also, on Erikson with whom he studied at Harvard: 'He had an enormous influence



on me. He was very brilliant, and he is still appreciated in America. He never went to college. He was actually a painter, and maybe had that arty/science stretch also. What he was, was a brilliant observer. I don't have his brilliance of observing, but I wrote about that skill.....about how his ability to notice things and to make sense of them was really why everybody read him.' Interview with Steen Nepper Larsen , January 30th 2002.

<sup>16</sup> Born in Pistoia, Marino Marini, was a contemporary (and eventually a friend) of Henry Moore, who came to prominence in 1948 with major exhibitions in Milan, New York and Munich. His work referenced the early Etruscan culture, which is celebrated in the many collections of archaeological examples across Tuscany: his work which includes riders, figures, portraits, horses, in plaster and bronze, adopted their simplified and archaic forms.

<sup>17</sup> The Fattoria di Celle (Celle Farm) hosts the important collection of site-specific art that Giuliano Gori and his family began in the early 1980s. Magdalena Abakanowicz, Dani Karavan, Sol Le Witt, Fausto Melotti, Pistoletto, Anne and Patrick Poirier and Mauro Staccioli as well as temporary works by Robert Morris and Parmigianni.

<sup>18</sup> A quotation from Donatella Giovannini during the session with her at the end of our visit.

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APPENDIX 6

FILM: *PLOT 74*

## APPENDIX 6



PLOT 74  
(DOCUMENTS OF PROCESS)

## APPENDIX 7

*RE-SEMBLE*



# R E - S E M B L E

CHRIS WRIGHT & VERONICA WEST

8-9 OLD BLACKSMITH'S YARD  
SADLERGATE  
DERBY DE1 3PD

JUNE 14th - JULY 1st 2010 (except Sundays)  
12.00 - 6.00pm

WORKSHOPS JUNE 21st - 25th 4.00 - 6.00pm  
children welcome accompanied by an adult

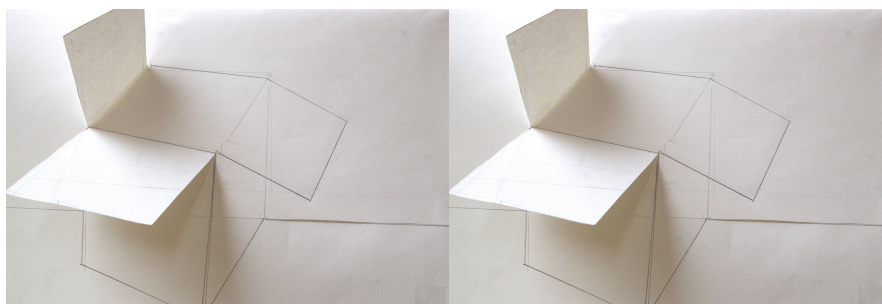




Figure 72 Chris Wright & Veronica West *Re-Semble* Work in progress 2010

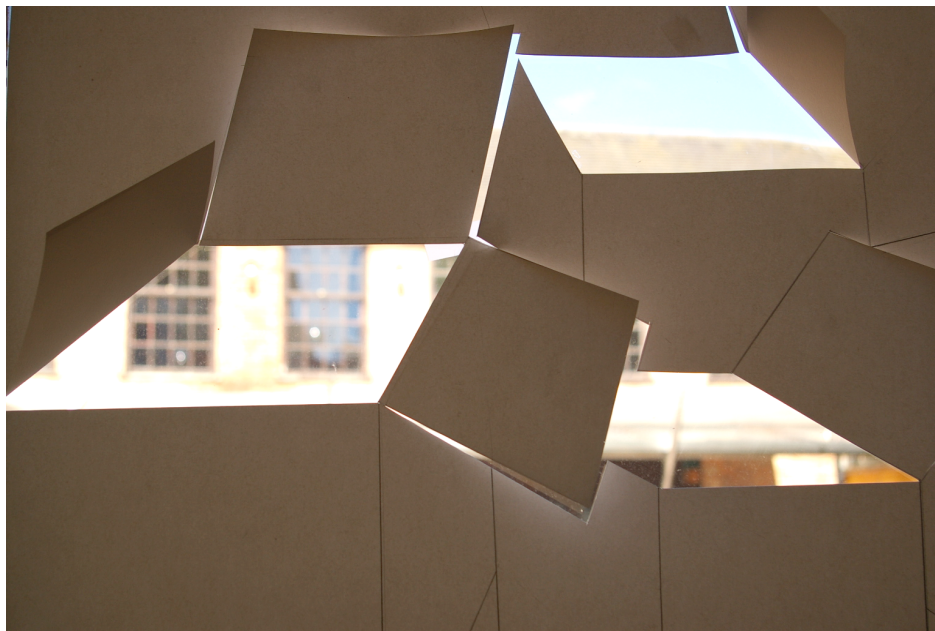


Figure 73. Chris Wright & Veronica West *Re-Semble* 2010









## *Re- Semble*

June 2010 Old Blacksmiths Yard, Derby

A Collaboration between Chris Wright & Veronica West

Towards the end of 2009 Chris Wright and Veronica West, both PhD students at Staffordshire University decided to collaborate on a project together. Co-incidentally in Derby (VW's home town) a project was being organized to utilize the many empty shops that had appeared over the last two years, for artists to exhibit or use for installation or video works. They therefore submitted a proposal in February 2010, which was approved in April. This was accomplished by the beginning of June and they were able to start at the end of the first week, continuing in a residency there until the end of the month. Their proposal went through a number of changes prior to submission in order to find ways to develop their respective practices in a truly collaborative way. The principal aim was to respond to the specific nature of the environment and architecture of the space in which they would be working. They wanted to work in a way which was open and experimental, to create an environment which was more akin to a studio than a gallery, and included the offer of workshop sessions with members of the public who were interested.

In the discussions that they held beforehand, it became evident that there were certain correspondences in the nature of their work, one being the sense of absence that can be evoked or felt in certain spaces, structures or arrangements of effects. Chris Wright had been working with ideas of provisional structures based on those seen in the Far East in Laos and Thailand, some of which were 'spirit houses'. Veronica West had been working with found objects from an allotment, all remnants from a previous occupier, which she then embellished with gesso and brought together in various combinations. However they felt it was important to respond to the specific nature of the place, and not to simply import previous ideas.

However there were certain other considerations and ideas that also entered into their response, one major issue being the economic effects of the banking crisis and the emphasis despite that on the need to buy our way out of the ensuing recession. Derby City Council had approved the development of a site at the edge of the city centre, by Westfield, and this once it opened drew a huge number of 'consumers' out of the city

centre and dramatically affected the 'footfall' in the Cathedral Quarter, the area in which the premises were situated, off Sadlergate, the oldest, most interesting architecturally, and most expensive shopping street in the town.

The nature of collaborations is often difficult especially when there is a pressure of time. This first time collaboration has been no exception. Whilst they have explored and questioned the nature of site –specific installations especially with regard to their own practices and research, they found they did not always have the time to question the nature of the collaboration itself and how it related to the work and their own individual ways of working. Here, they have attempted to address some of the issues that have arisen by asking each other six questions.

Chris Wright to Veronica West

*CW Has the collaboration brought forth any new questions, (or answers) about the role of play in the creating process that working alone would not have done?*

VW Two immediate thoughts: the importance of being relaxed and giving yourself time (not feeling driven by deadlines or feeling under pressure, which we were at the beginning). It was when we let go of that & found the materials that had been left there that we began to play); and how seeing what someone else does with materials stimulates ideas as well as energy to play with all the ideas & materials to hand. I also realised that there are different styles of playing. You found a lot of the materials upstairs and brought them down (polystyrene containers, plastic knives & forks, coffee filters, highly coloured tumblers) and downstairs (till rolls) and started to play with them (unpacking the polystyrene boxes & letting them fall to the floor), whilst I got intrigued with the possibility of wetting the heavy fabiano paper & experimenting with moulding it to the forms in the space (the seats, the windows, the radiator). I found I was playing more with a technique & space (which became obsessive), rather than objects & space. Later also, light became important (with the tumblers & the glasses) for you, and we both became enthusiastic about the phenomena we observed and both recorded photographically. I think we both felt that we would have liked more time to continue playing - from a situation in which we were feeling rather at a loss what to do, we rapidly found ourselves in a situation where the possibilities seemed endless!

*CW Has working in this space provided a unique experience, one that could not have been gained from any other space?*

VW In one respect yes, absolutely! The work has emerged in response to the space and what we found in and outside it (the nature of the courtyard itself, the column for the bar 'White'). In another sense, the principles could apply in any space yet produce

strikingly different forms and effects.

*CW Process is important to you, obviously as it relates to play. How do you align this with the need to exhibit, any more than say putting a child's drawing on the fridge?*

VW That's a curious question! It seems rather disparaging to the child and to the drawing to just put it on the fridge (why not the wall) !! Anyway I think I get the question - that there is a fundamental dichotomy between the two? After all it's 'someone else (usually) who puts the child's drawing on the fridge (usually the parent). The child will often make a decision about what they make which relates very closely to the nature of what underlies the process, which may take very different forms. Some things they do are very private and not intended to be gifts or 'public' pieces at all, in fact it is most important to be sensitive to whether the child's process should be noticed or remarked on at all. For them it can be a simply normal process of living a life, like eating or playing or doing anything. We don't remark excitedly on the fact that a child is eating (normally) unless they haven't been. However some things children do are intended to be made for a purpose, or for a person, and are often made as gifts. This is always made clear, and what is also clear is that the giving is as important as the making...they are all one.

For us, there has been a conflict I think in that we have been required to show the results of our (playful) collaboration, and this brings inevitably a self-consciousness into the process that always inhibits. Should we have just continued making, as a kind of performance piece during the 'private view'? Perhaps we shall! This might involve destroying everything we have made so far. Perhaps it should. The point is that it is a continually evolving process, and I may and perhaps should decide that 'the boxes' having been a pre-conceived element should go! Their dismemberment could be a performance piece.....

*CW Have any of your perceptions about collaboration been challenged?*

VW I know that collaboration is by definition, difficult, and also unique to the people and the circumstances, so no not really. I have collaborated only on three installations but all of them have been entirely different. This one has been unique in that we had to work together to produce a proposal and occurred in a way that was reciprocal and straightforward, (tasks were shared equally and communication was effective). This was a good sign for our collaboration, and this has continued but it has still been very hard. We have had a very short time to make a piece of work and get to know one another at the same time, and getting to know one another as artists means really digging down, and we still need to do more of that. I would say this is an introductory session in which some very clear differences have emerged, as well as some common

sensibilities, or rather a recognition and an appreciation of certain similar, and also certain very different sensibilities.

*CW How did you know when you were finished?*

VW I don't think we are - let's say it's a pause for reflection.....

*CW The nature of site-specific work is just that, relating to that particular site, did you feel that you had preconceived notions of what you would like to produce?*

VW I suspect that by the form of this question you are implying that I had, and to be honest I think I did, in wanting to play around with the idea of the boxes. It seemed to me appropriate in an empty shop situation to explore the image of the cardboard box, the container of commodities, and its open-ness or closed-ness, and the way the little illusionistic maquette worked where it seems open but it's really closed. It seemed to me it could be taken further & be intriguing on a larger scale. I think if you had seriously objected however, I would have jettisoned it, and I did think about midway it would be necessary to do that. It could be something that would change radically given another week.

However in all the exhibitions and installations I have been involved in I have been acutely aware of the nature of the space, and they have as here been made specifically for it : the 'Infinity' loop in the reclaimed quarry on the edge of Wirksworth, (2001) the piece about the eclipse 'On (almost) the line of totality' (1999) for the Wirksworth Festival, and 'In Parenthesis' for the 'Real' Gallery New York (1999).

Veronica West to Chris Wright

*VW In what way do you think that collaboration changed what you would have done had you worked alone?*

CW A major thing has been the way that I have thought about what I am doing. At times, I have felt distinctly constrained which is no reflection on you but relates purely to myself, I am more used to working alone. So I feel that it has been important to get out of my comfort zone of sole autonomy and explore the ideas of collaboration and the flux of two contrasting characters trying for the first time to create something. Sometimes it has felt as if I am being subsumed and I am sure that you have had similar feelings. It is not a question of trying to persuade, alter, change, push the other but a balance that has to be worked out. Challenging the normal modes of each of our behaviors, how we do things and relate to our work is necessary for each of us to grow within our own practice. I now understand the difference between our work and the process of making. Working here with the limitations of time has been interesting and it has been a lot of pressure. The collaboration has sometimes been uncomfortable but that is how it should be. Working together has brought new challenges and ideas. It has

made me evaluate what I have come to take for granted.

VW *How does the experience and the concept of working in this space in the centre of an English town relate to the very different kinds of places you have worked with elsewhere in the Far East?*

CW It is a question of using a fixed venue. The work that I often do and did in the Far East was always ephemeral. There are, of course, limitations with this type of work, chiefly in the documentation. It obviously becomes a photograph, an image that has its own kind of context and I am not very happy with that. It often also has the sense of the individual acts of placing art as intervention becoming a performance piece and again, too many subtexts.

Modes of human behaviour and how that shapes space are very similar everywhere. I think that it is just a case of responding. Miwon Kwon uses different words to describe site specific work such as site-responsive, site-aware and these terms are justified but maybe only different sides of the same coin.

VW *Do you think we should stop or do you think that we would be more true to the idea of process if we continue changing and evolving the installation throughout the time we have here?*

CW It does depend on whether you look on this time as a residency or a residency with an exhibition at the end. There is a value in editing what we have done for the benefit of others (as in exhibition). I think that it is important to stand back and look at things. I do not feel that I personally have done enough reflection and with that process of reflection comes an understanding of what we are trying to do here. We have treated the space as a sort of studio and studios are places where ideas are explored without preconception of their finish. However, we have invited an audience and I feel that we have to take stock, to evaluate. Not all our ideas merit the same attention. If, however, we are inviting people to our studio space we need to show the finished work, the process and the work in progress. It is my view that we should stop, stop and take stock, that we should use the time not only for practice but also for theory, that we take a holistic attitude to the space and what we are trying to do both as an installation and a collaboration.

VW *Do you think that it is necessary to 'finish'?*

CW This relates to the previous answer. In the sense that one never finishes, it is necessary to finish here in Blacksmith's Yard because we have been trying to present work as an exhibition in the final week and we are contracted to finish on a particular date. These outside considerations impose limits but it is maybe necessary. The



practicing of art is a continual process that does not ever end either in the form of thinking or making. However, I do believe it is necessary to have breaks where one allows time to reflect. Otherwise there is no space to learn from the process. It is also harder to change direction if needs be. However, this is only a stage in our own individual art practices and perhaps in a future Wright and West collaboration.

VW *We talked about the presence of absence, and the evocation of presence in your work through the 'spirit structures', and in mine through the embellishment of found objects. Do you think that there is any sense of this occurring in the result of our collaboration?*

CW I think through our conversations, there have been instances of this occurring but I don't feel that it has translated into practice. But it may be that we have different notions of presence and absence. I actually don't feel that I have been evoking presence but more evoking absence. I understand that that may be where you feel your embellished objects lie but I think I might have a different interpretation as a viewer. Of course, this is where research gets interesting, the alternative views and interpretations of what is nominally the same thing. It does not come to light at first glance but reveals itself slowly through something like this collaboration.

However, in some ways, I think that we have fallen into the habit of working on our own things in a joint space under the guise of collaboration. With this habit, of course, comes the familiar, the 'everyday' of our own individual practices. I think that we may in the future, be able to work together on a true collaboration where the work is genuinely a joint effort rather than us working together in one space. I think that what we have experienced is no different from the early stages of any other collaboration that it will be seen as an enriching opportunity. I feel that I have a lot to learn about collaboration and also art practice and it is better to start and begin to learn than not to start at all because it is uncomfortable. I think if we started now, we would have more success at joint ideas and be able to evoke something.

VW *You have worked with light in earlier installations. Have the experiments with the conditions and found materials here given you ideas for further exploration?*

CW Usually I work from an idea, a concept that is then realized through light rather than light being the medium that drives the idea. It just happens that light fulfills those ideas. Here, however, the light was present even if, as in the case of the cupboard under the stairs, it was absent. What has been interesting has been the way that I realize all the subtexts of my work in this mutual setting and find that I do have a distinct way of working.

## APPENDIX 8

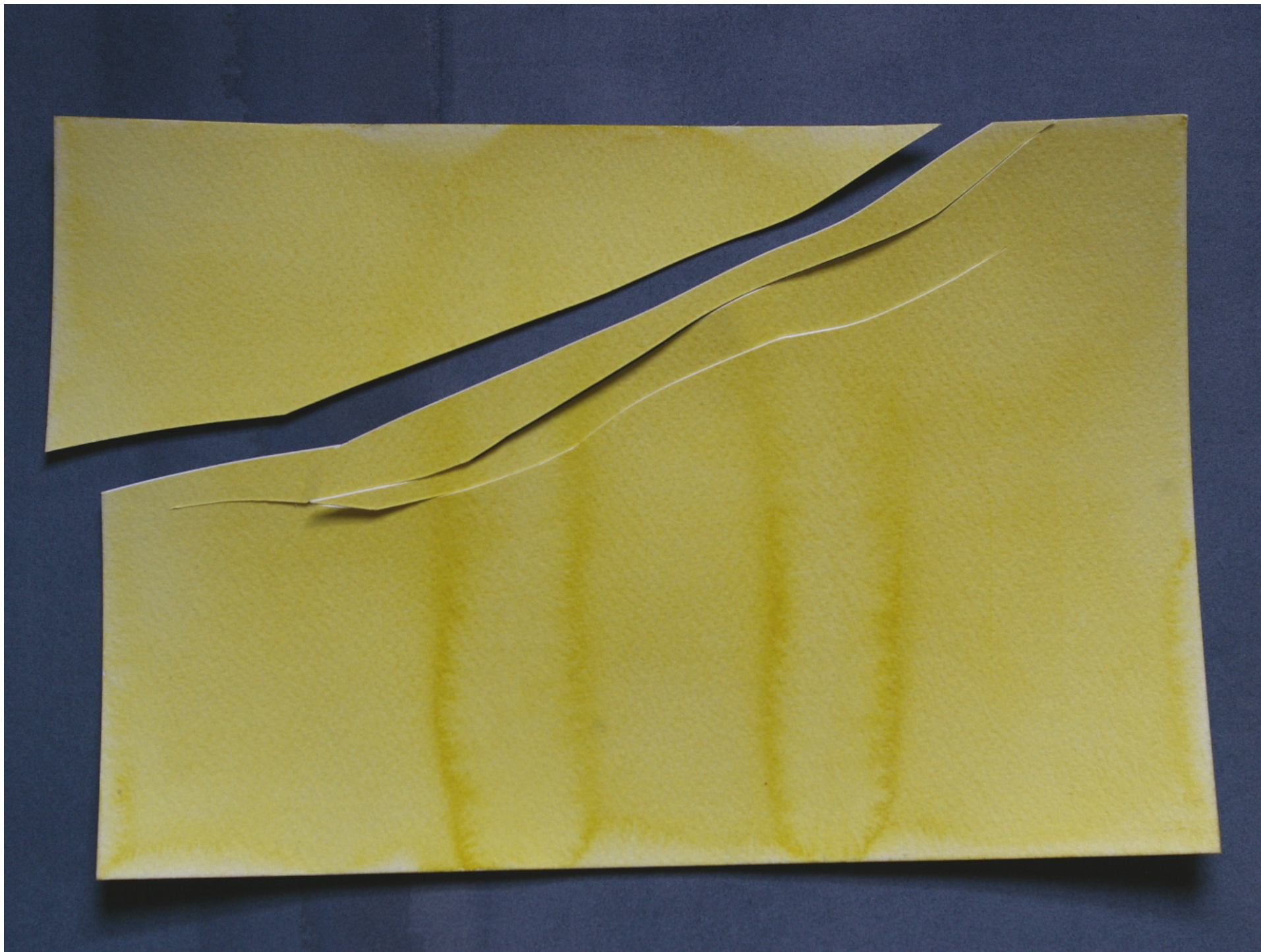
### *GOLD CUTS*

# GOLD CUTS

Chapter 2 Part 2: Experimentation in Practice



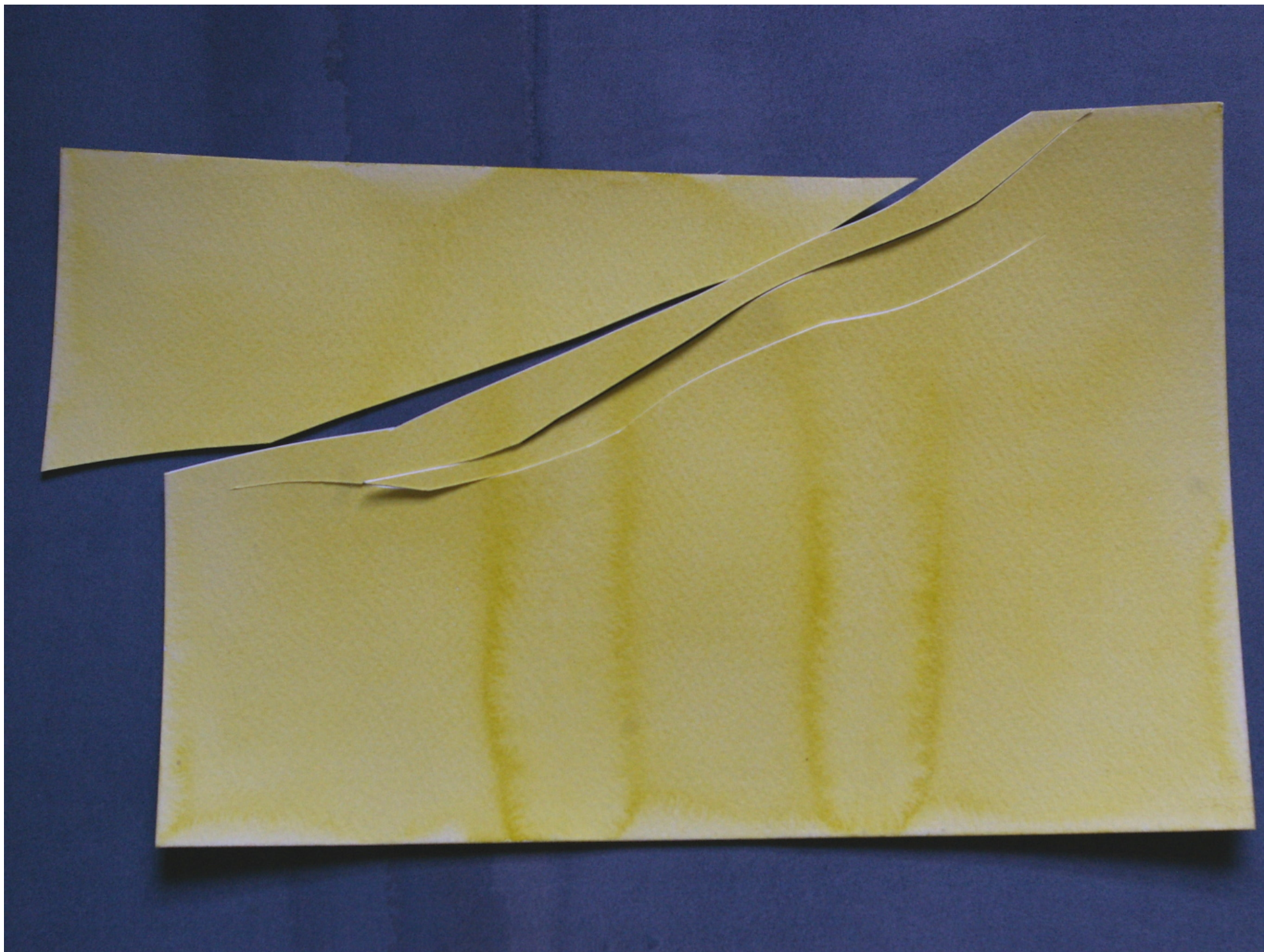




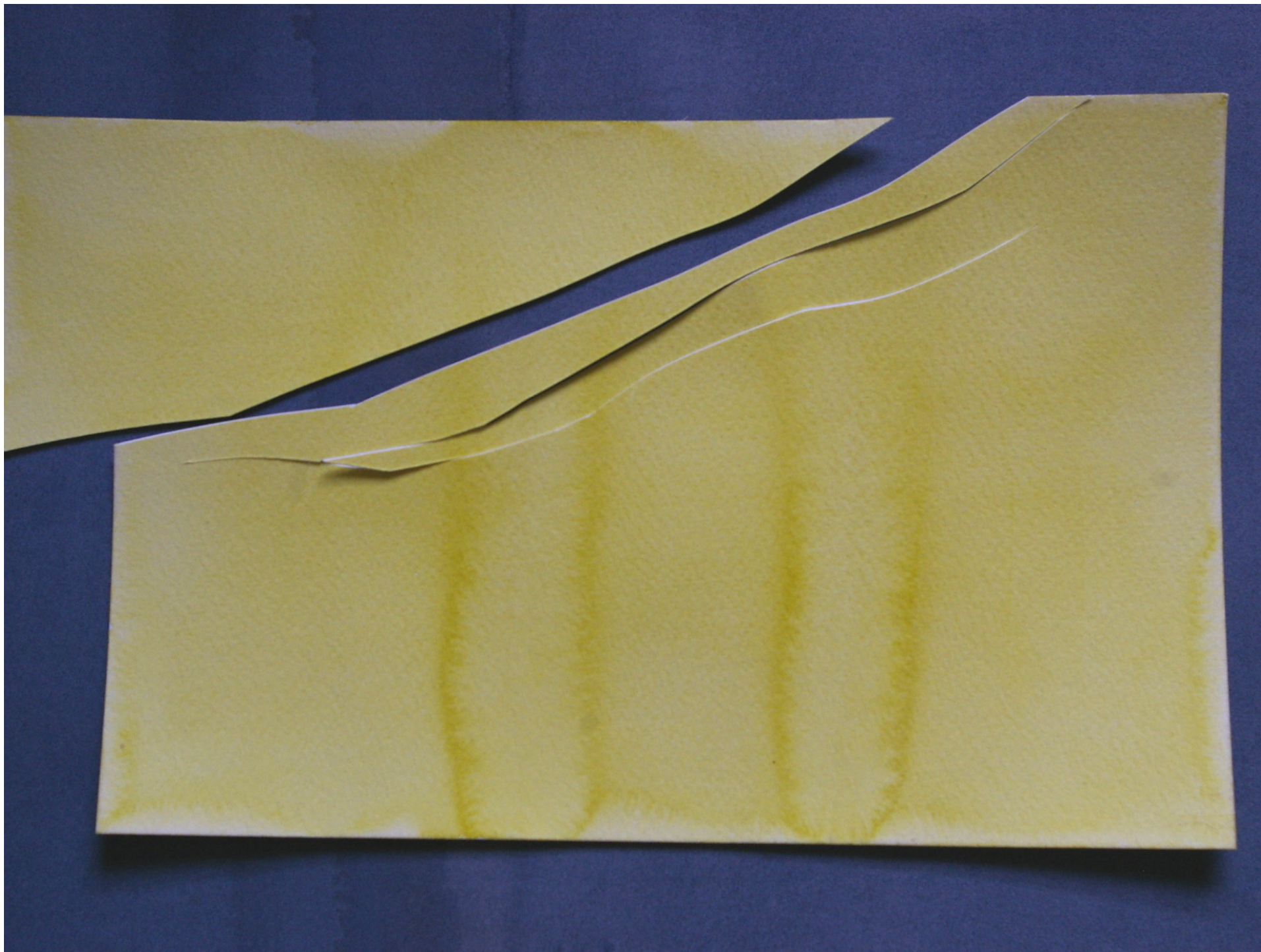




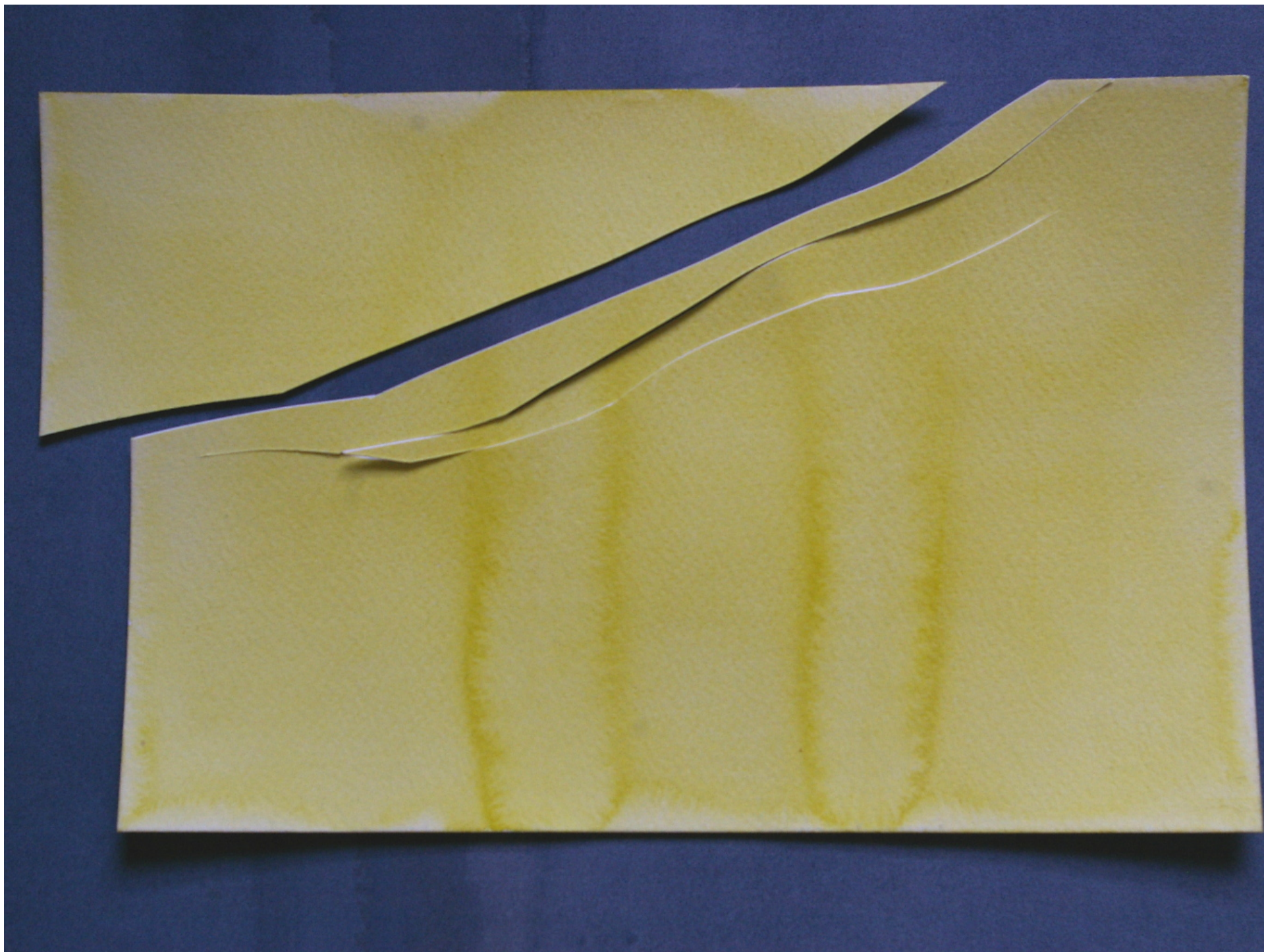




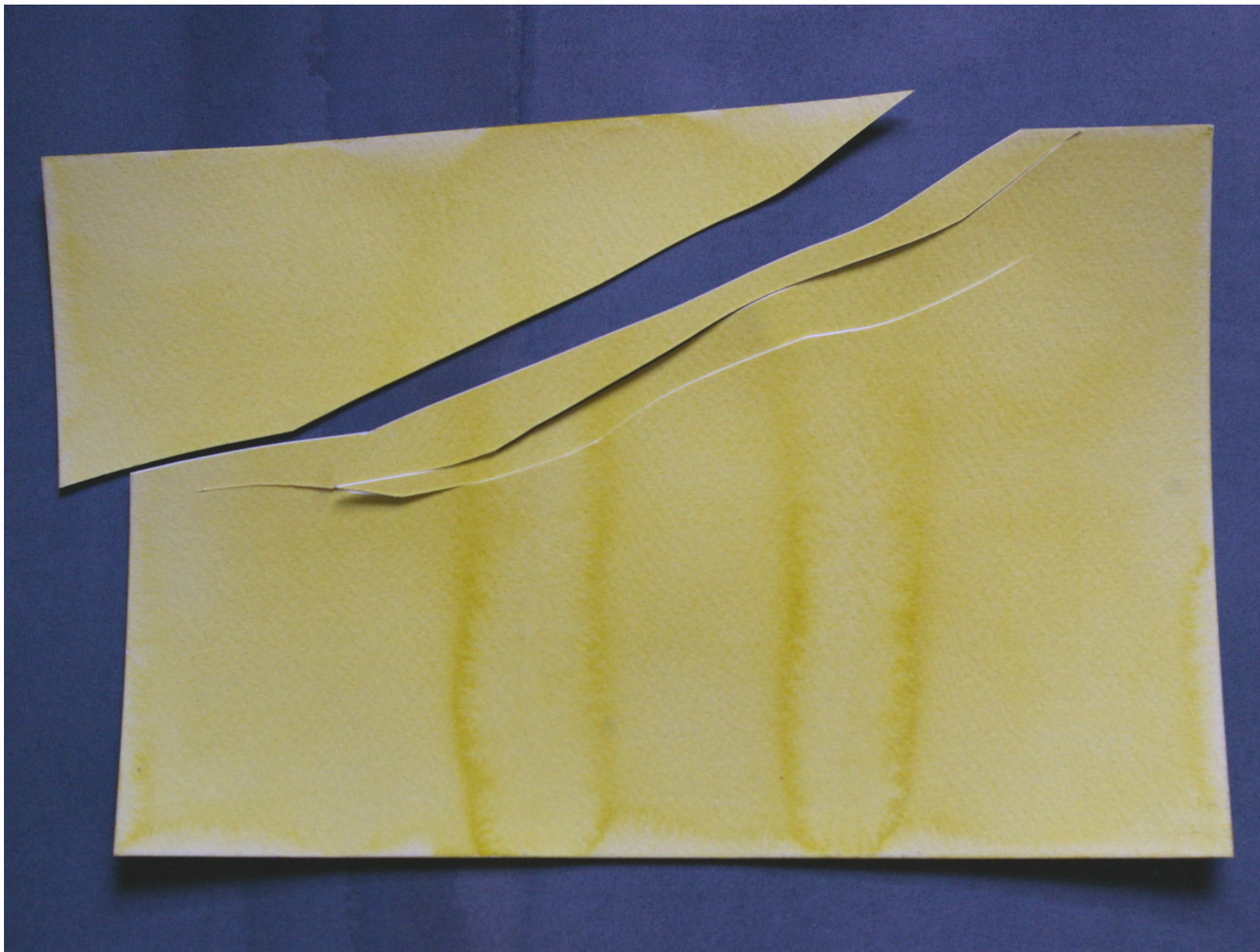




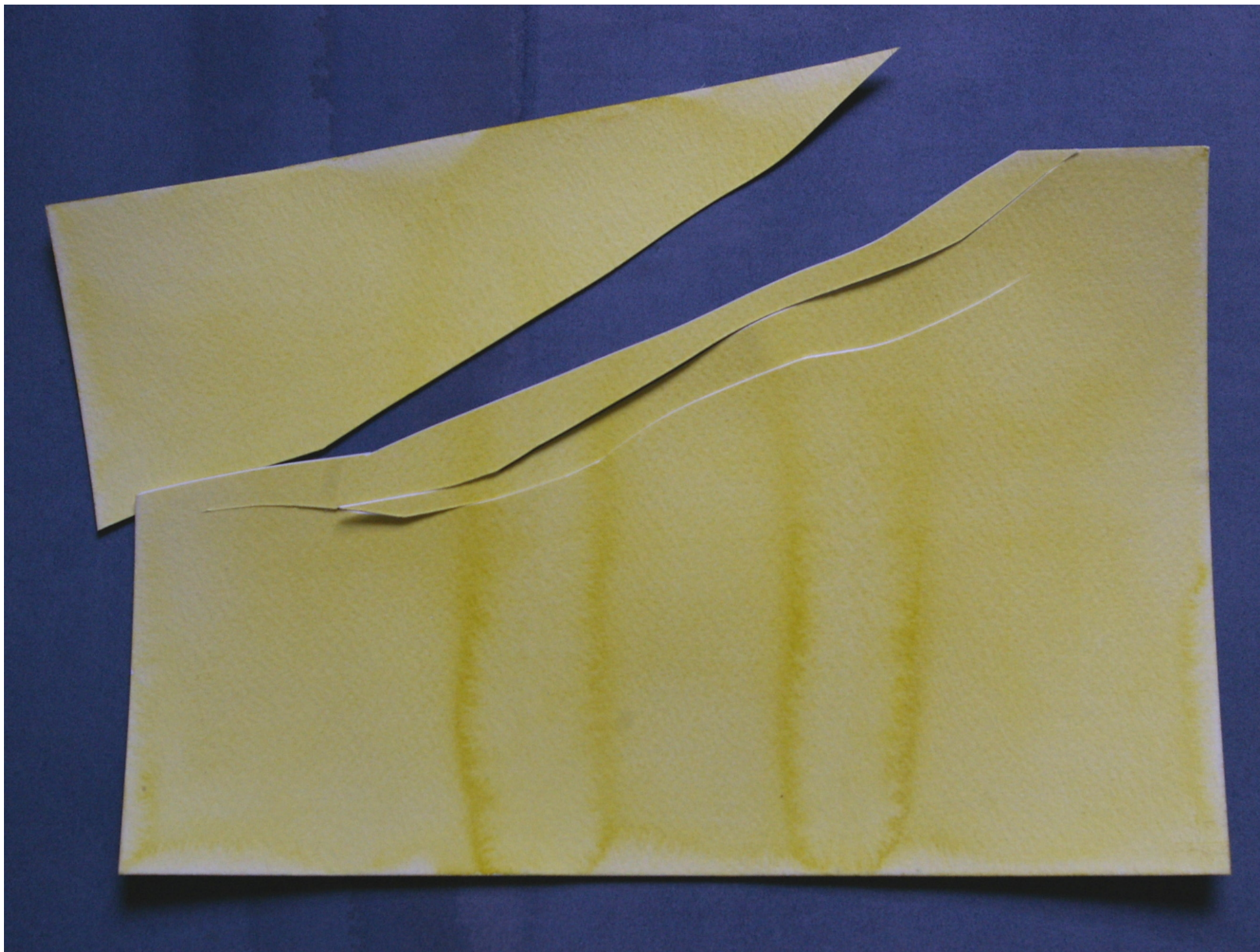








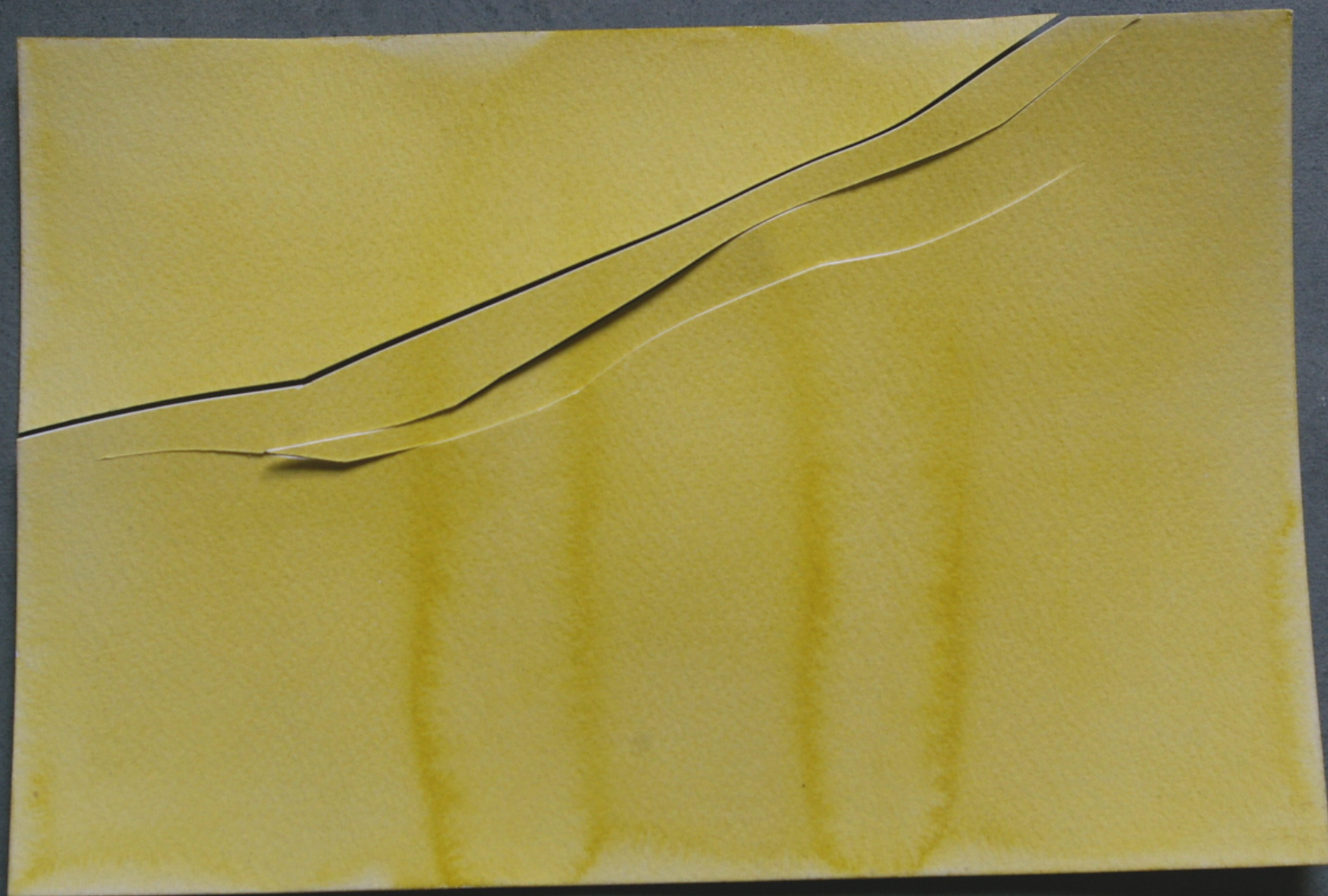




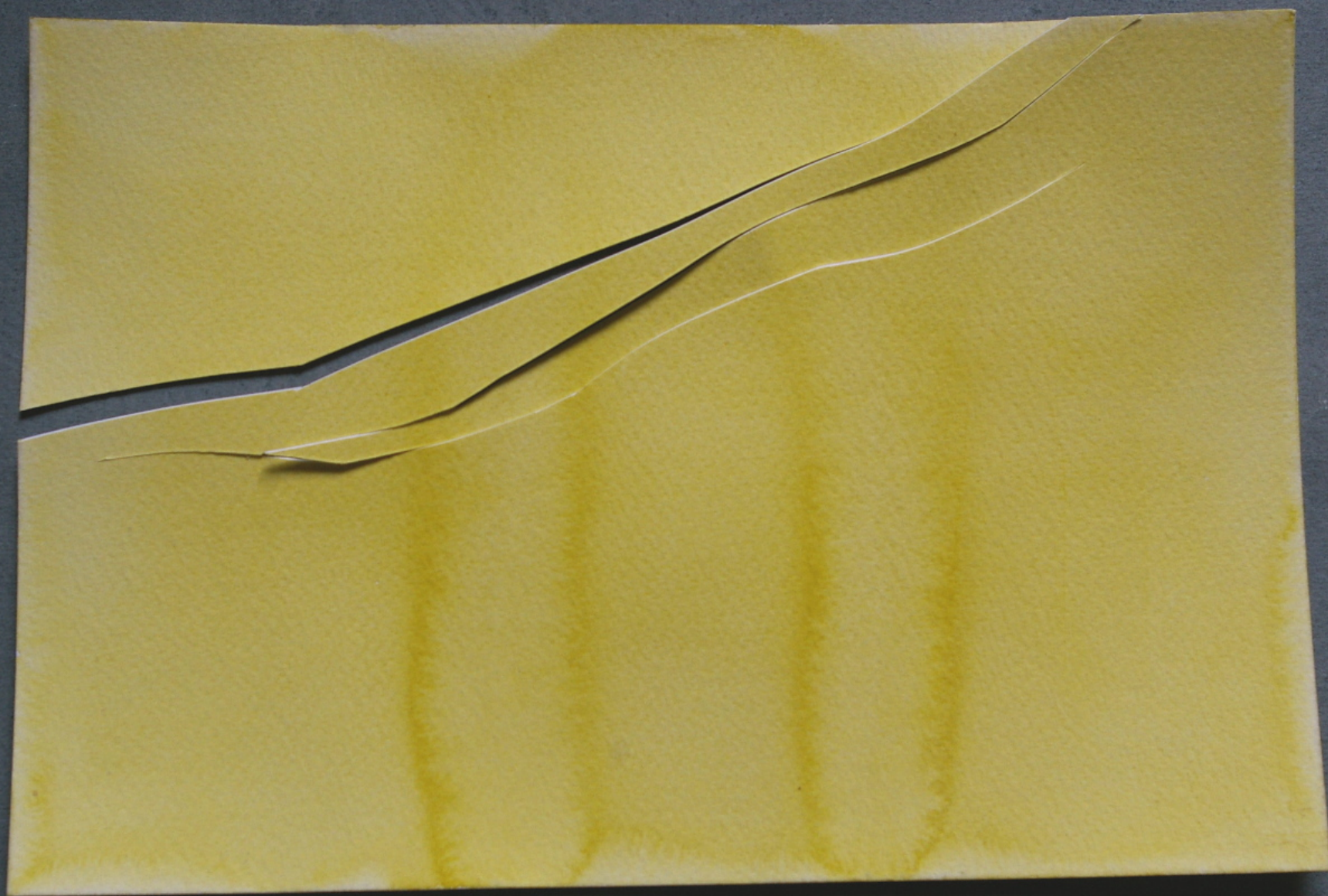




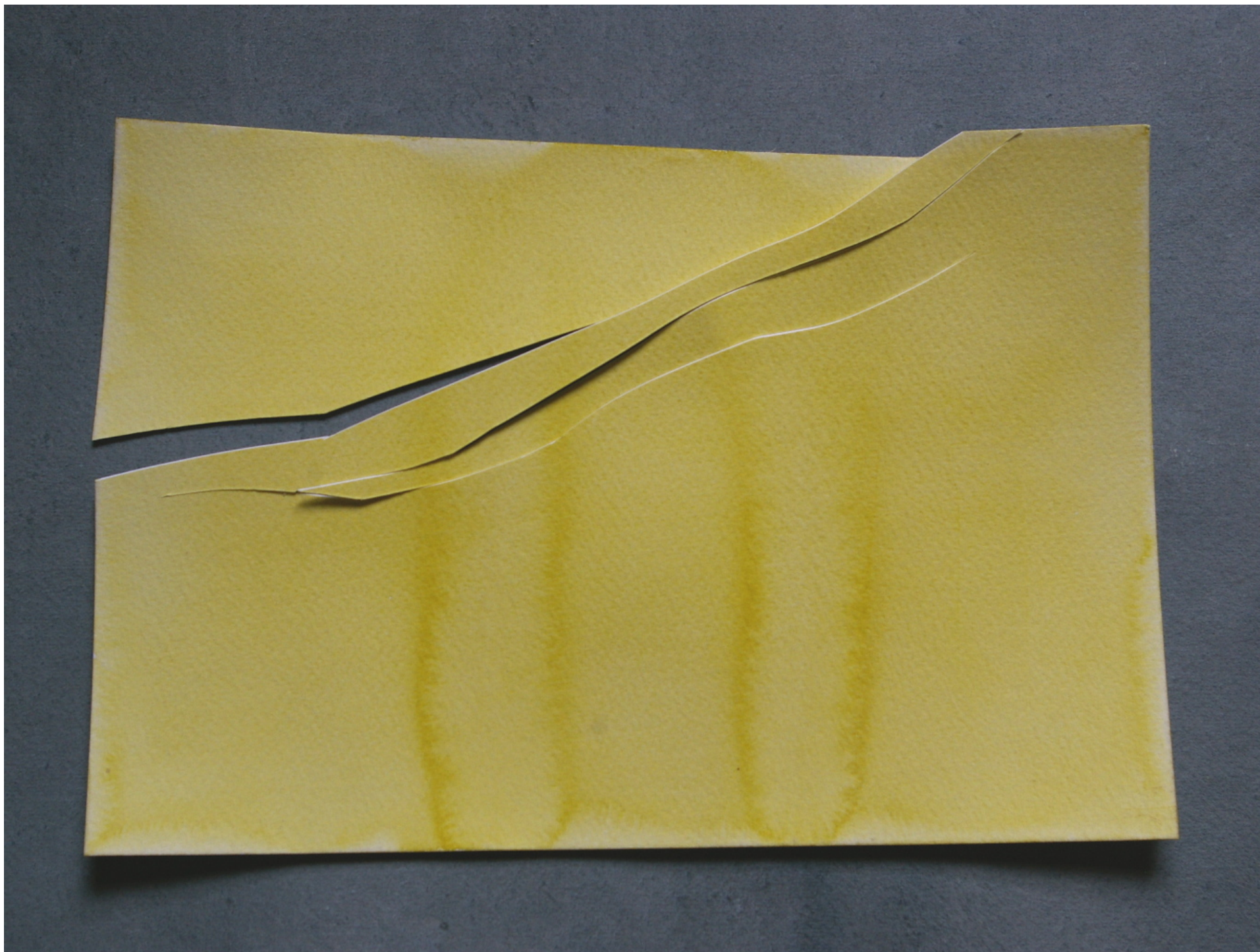








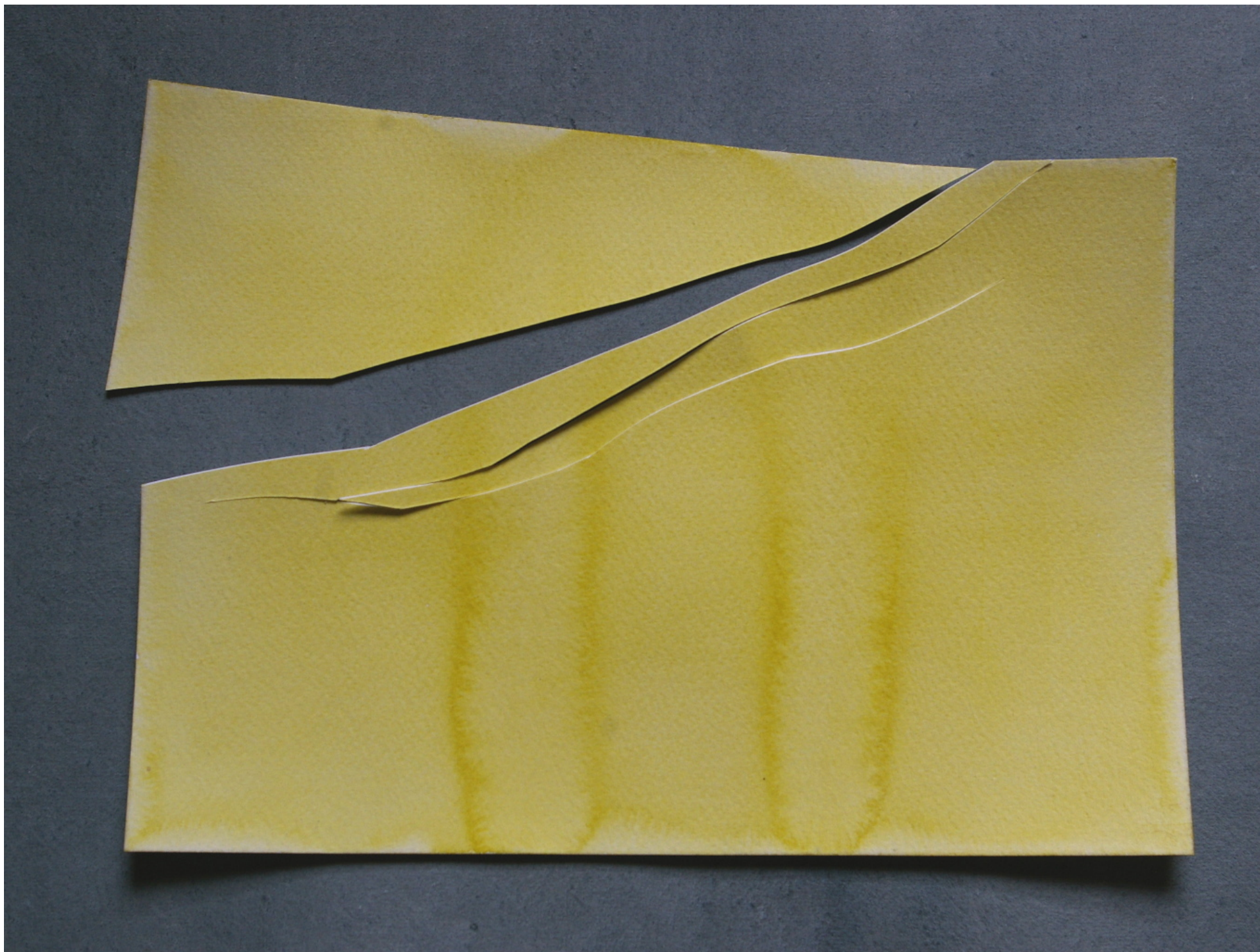












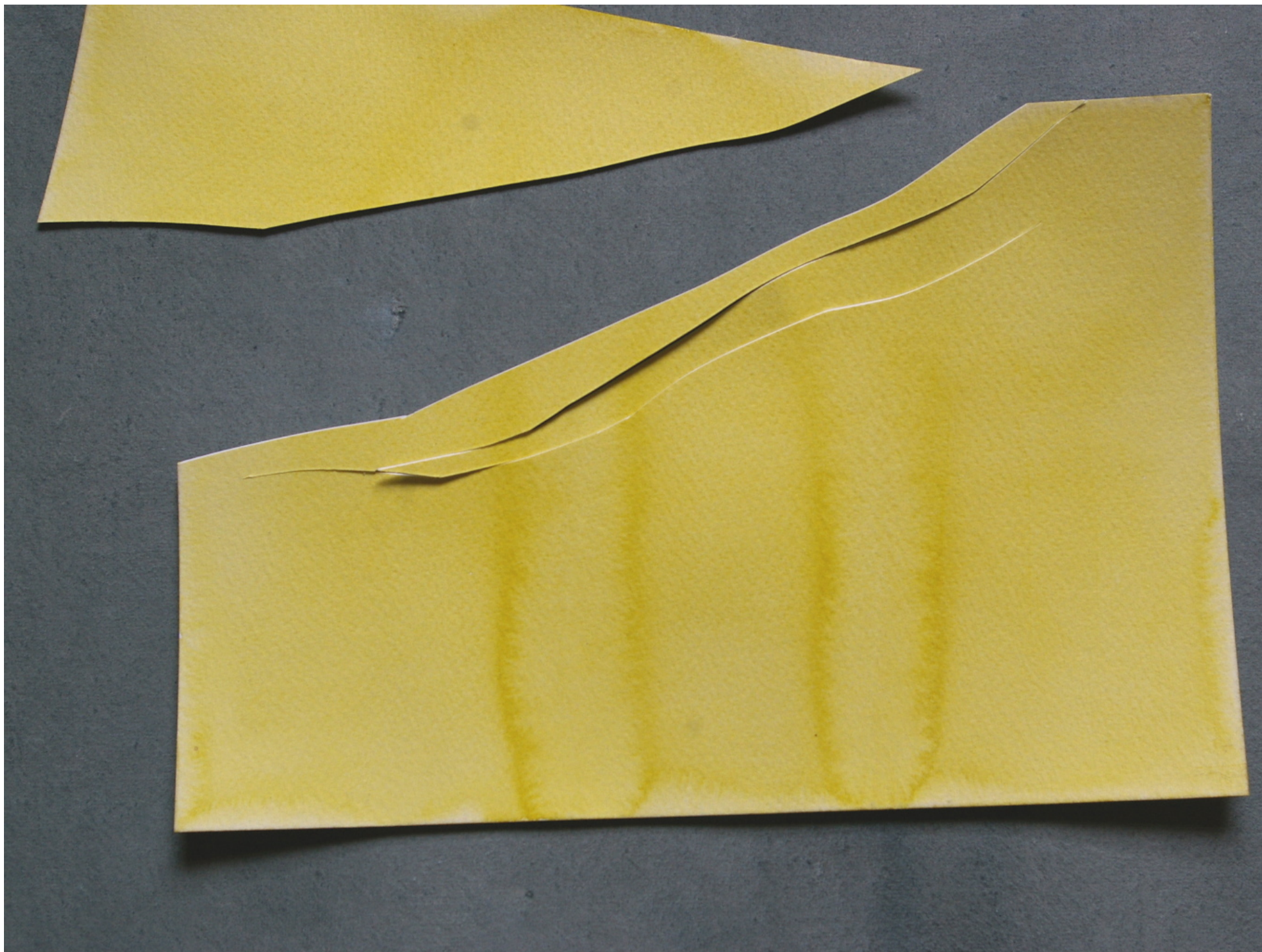








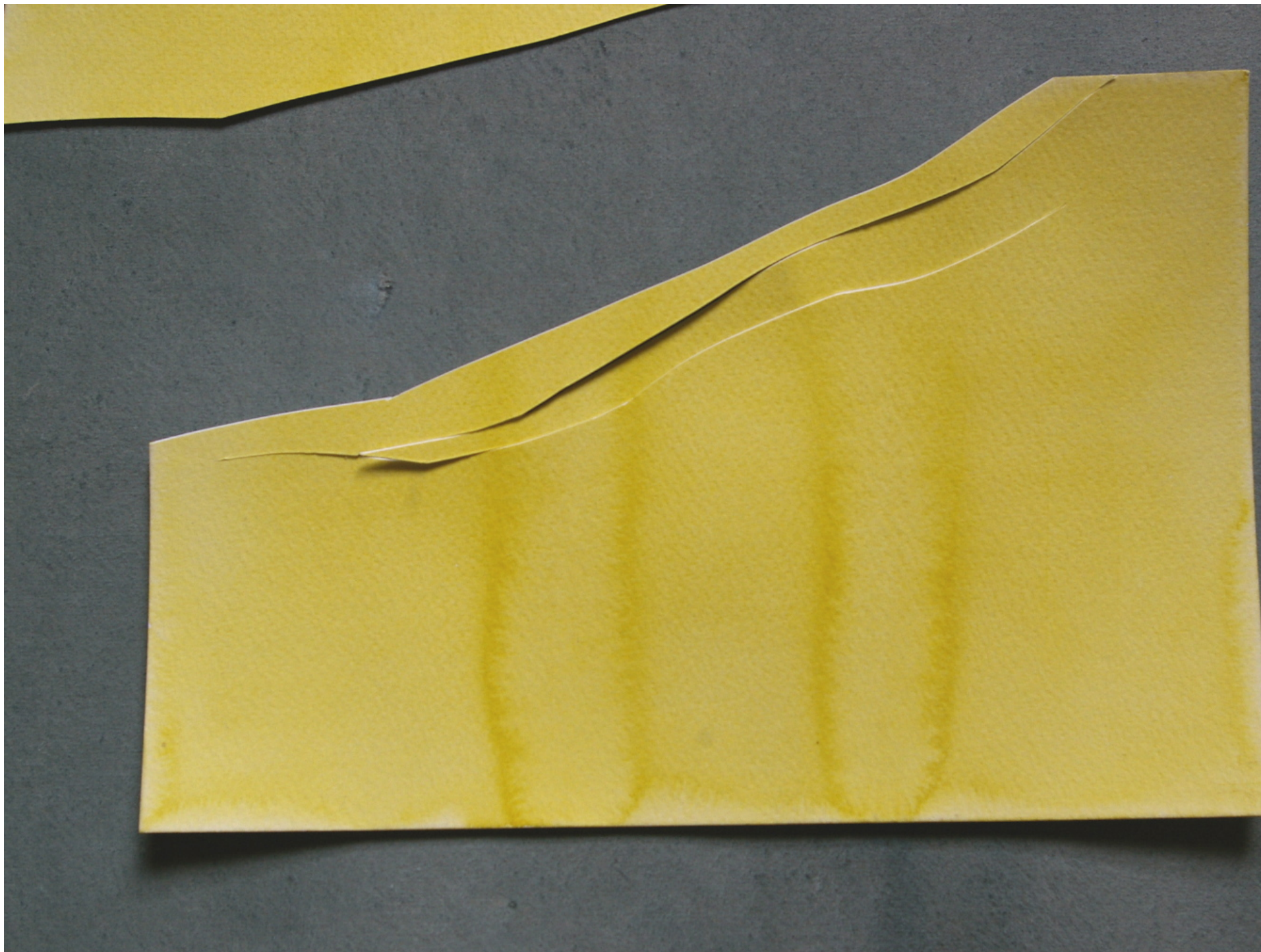




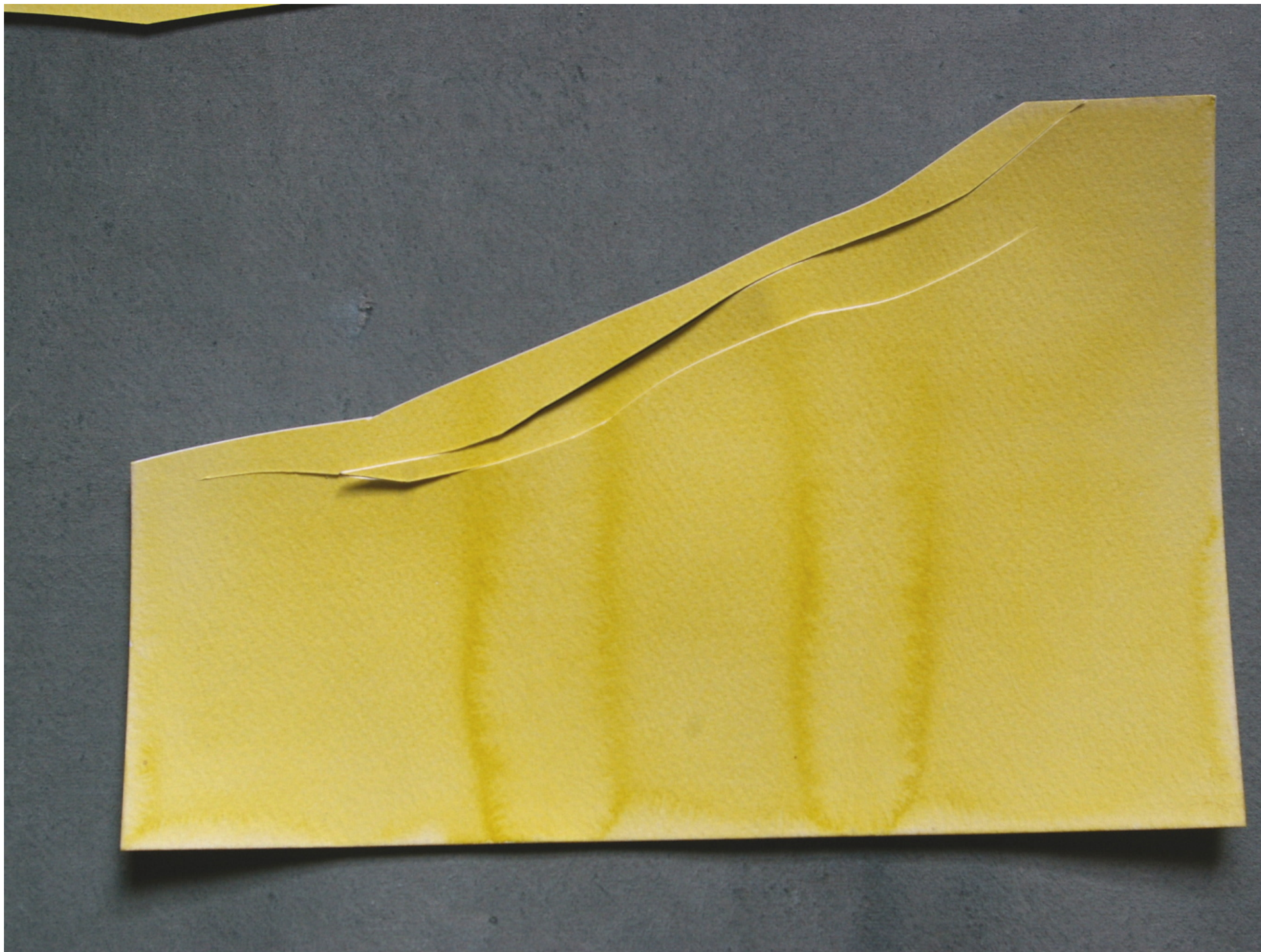




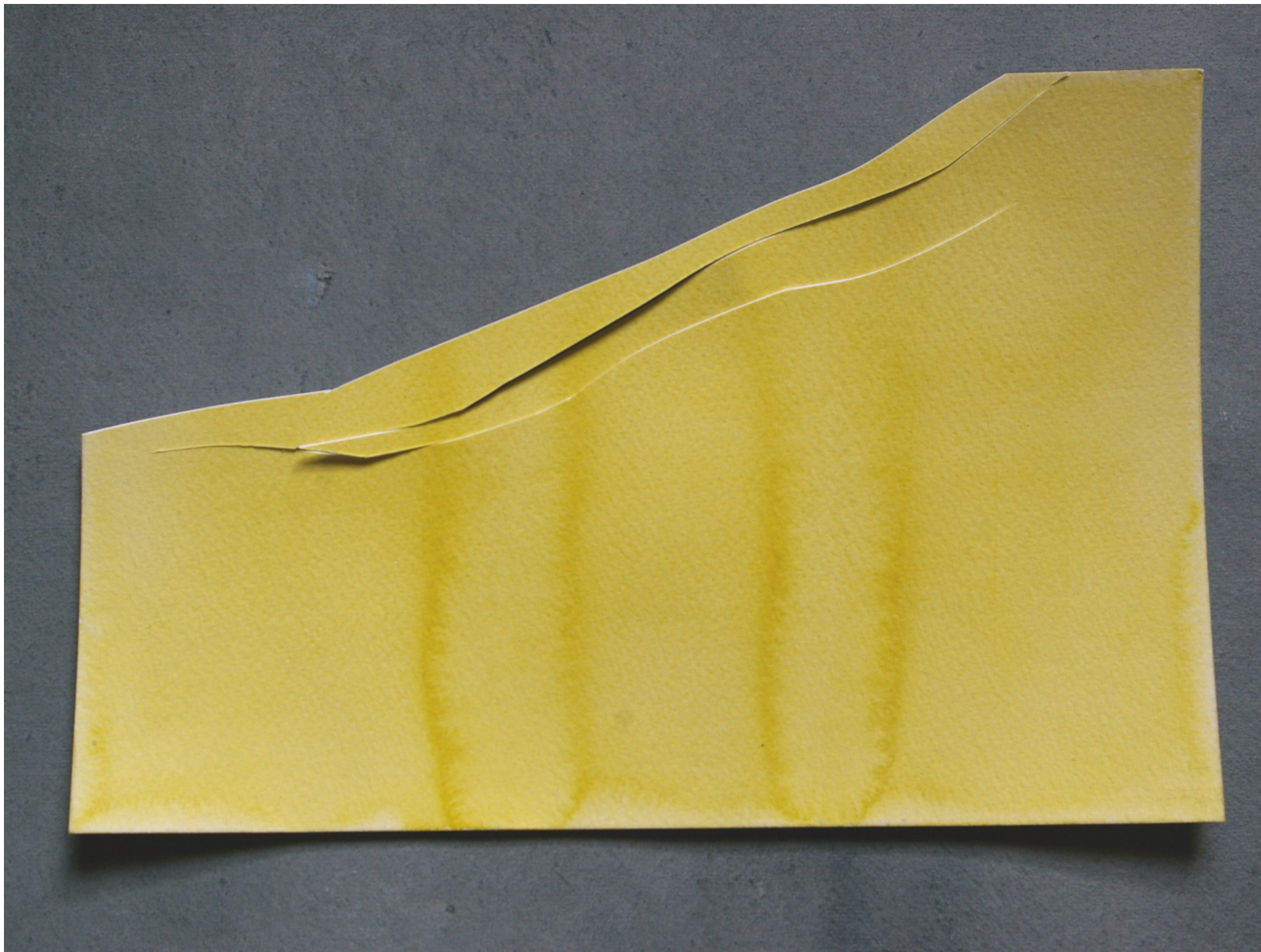




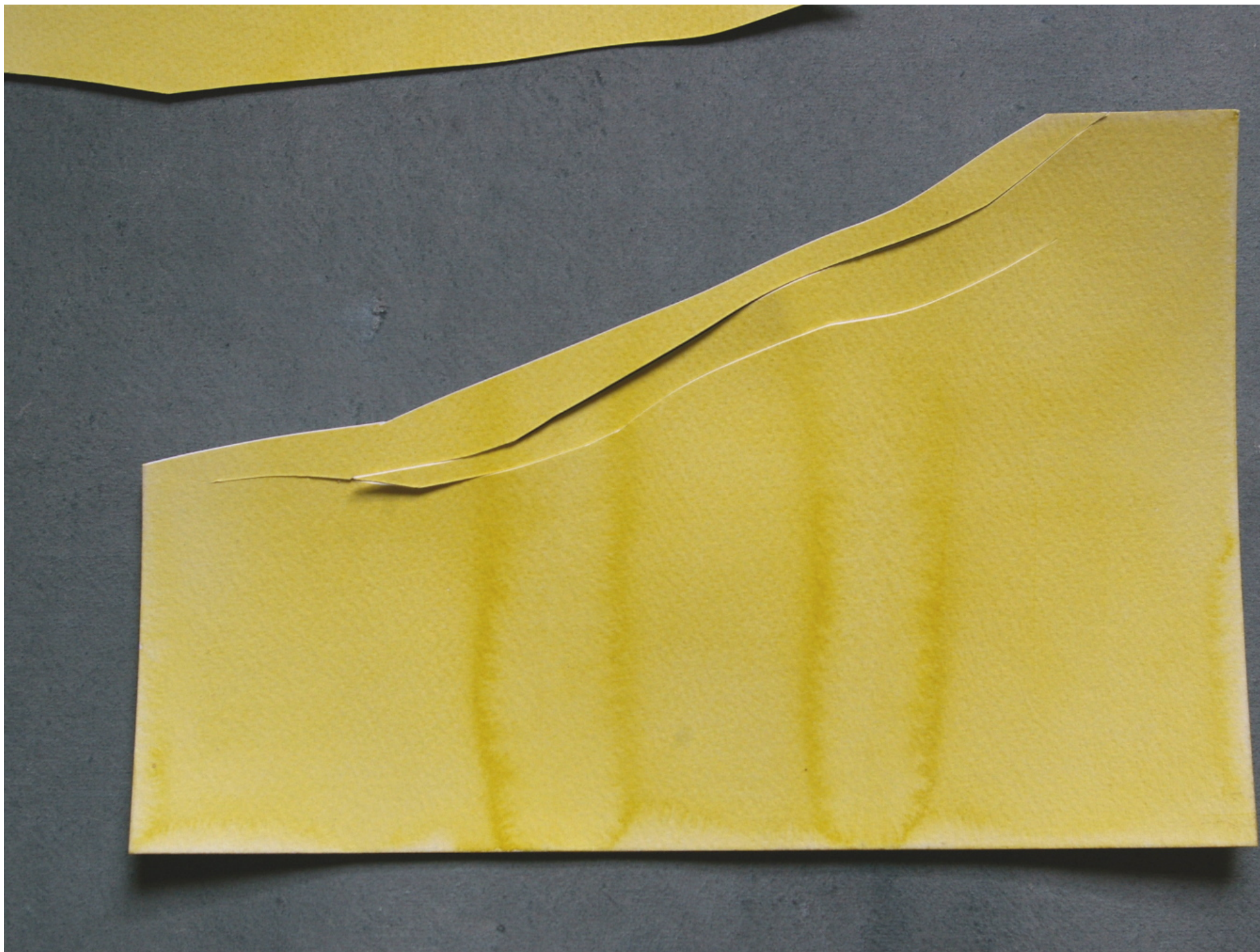




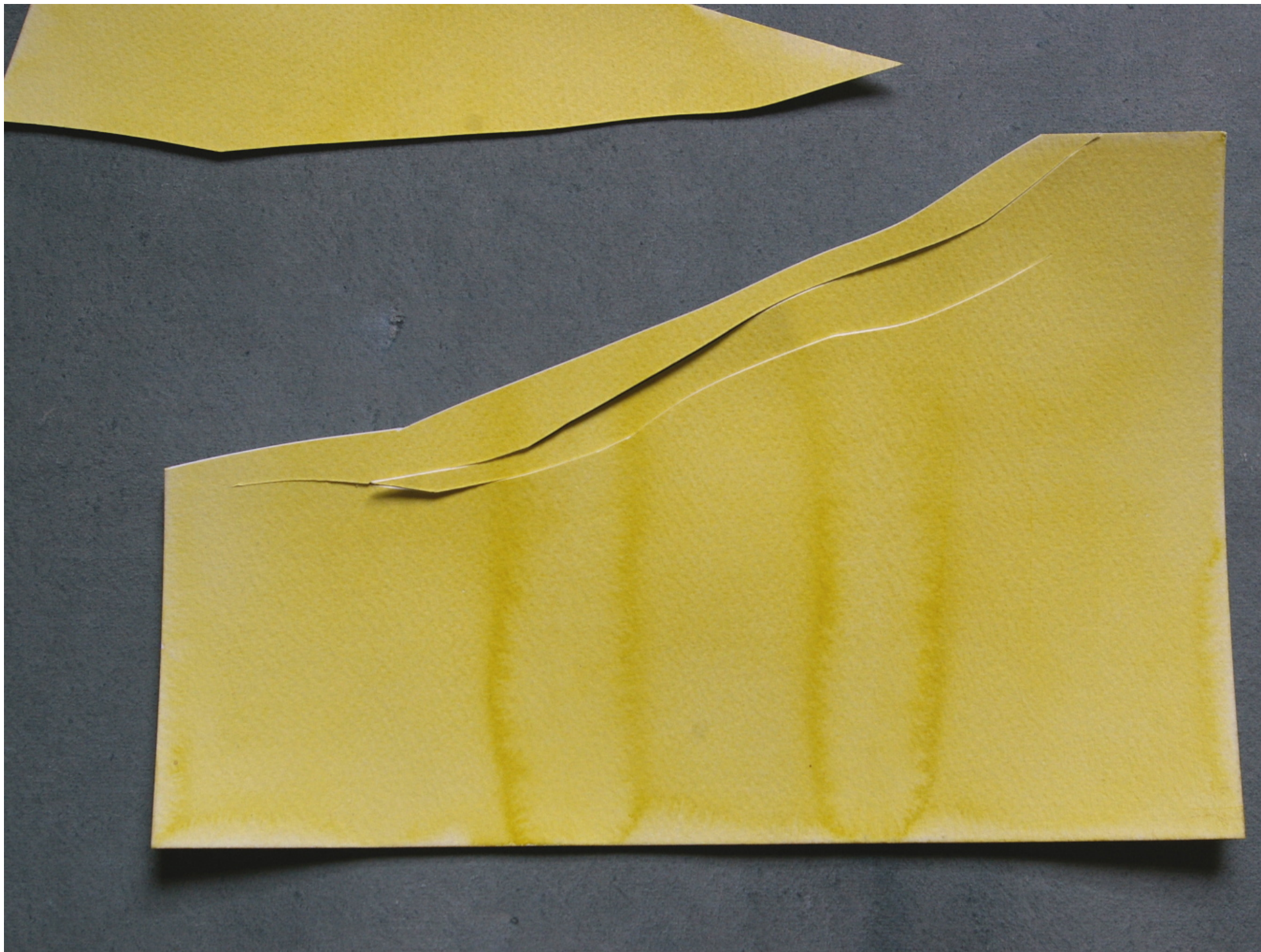








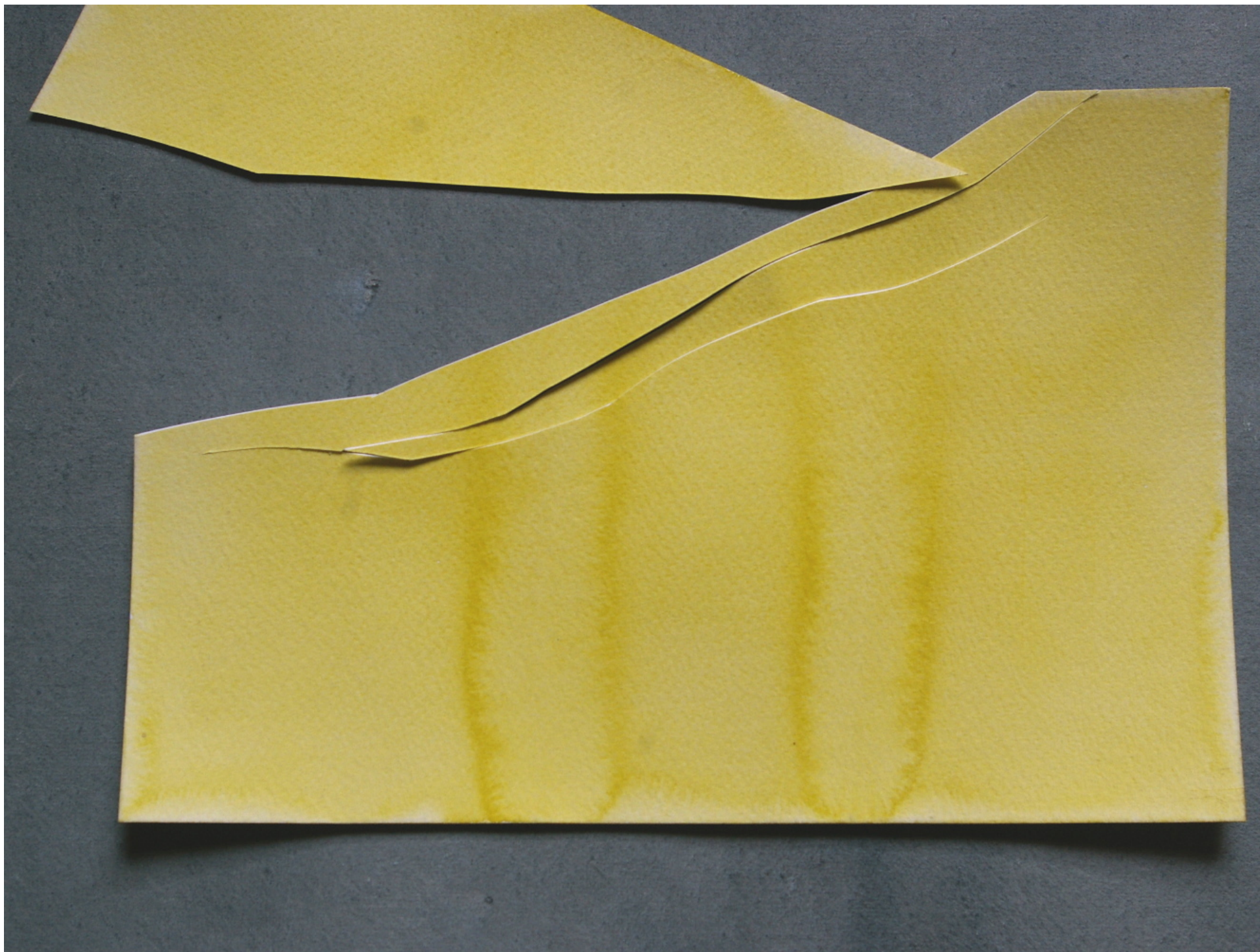




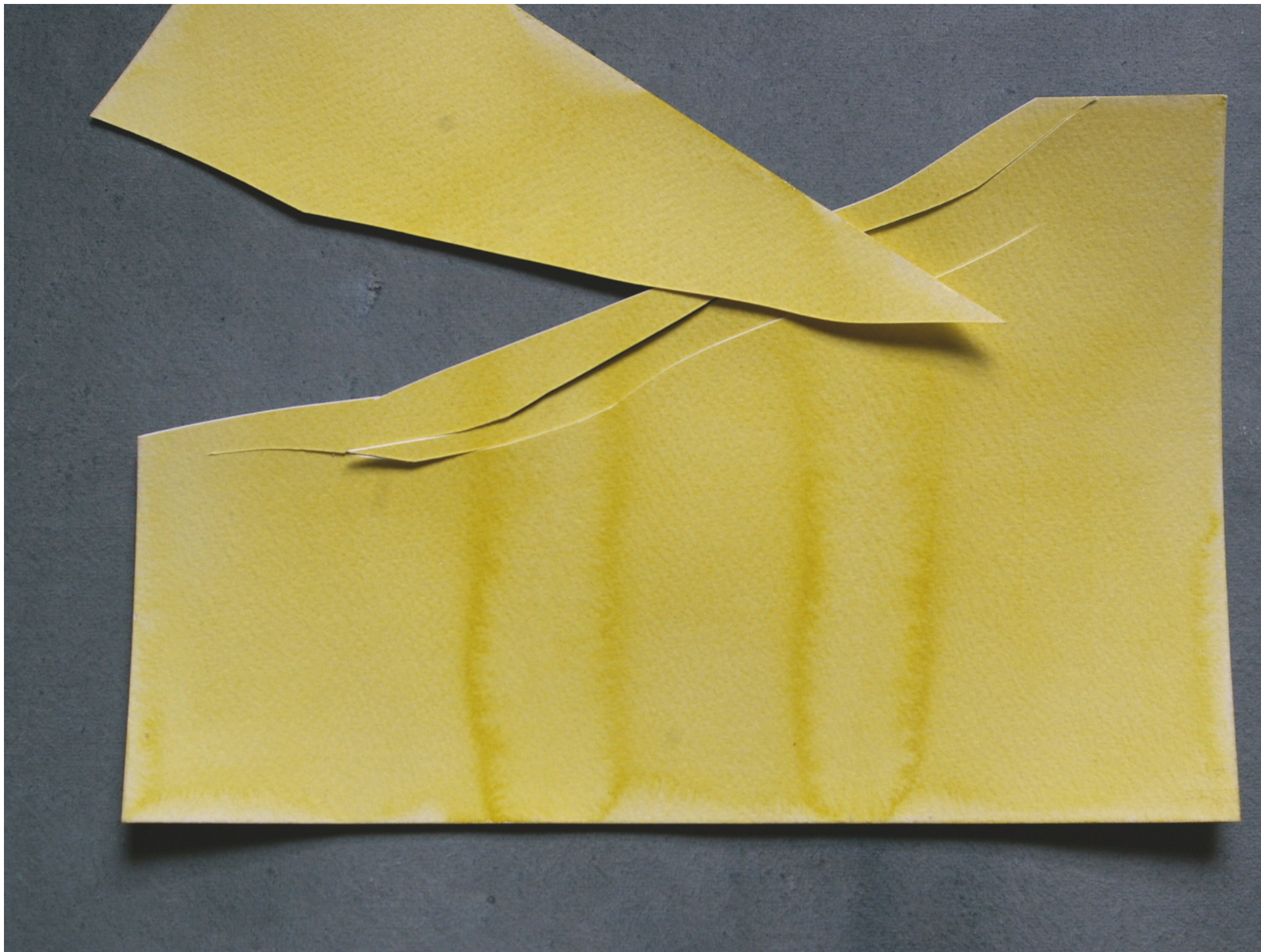




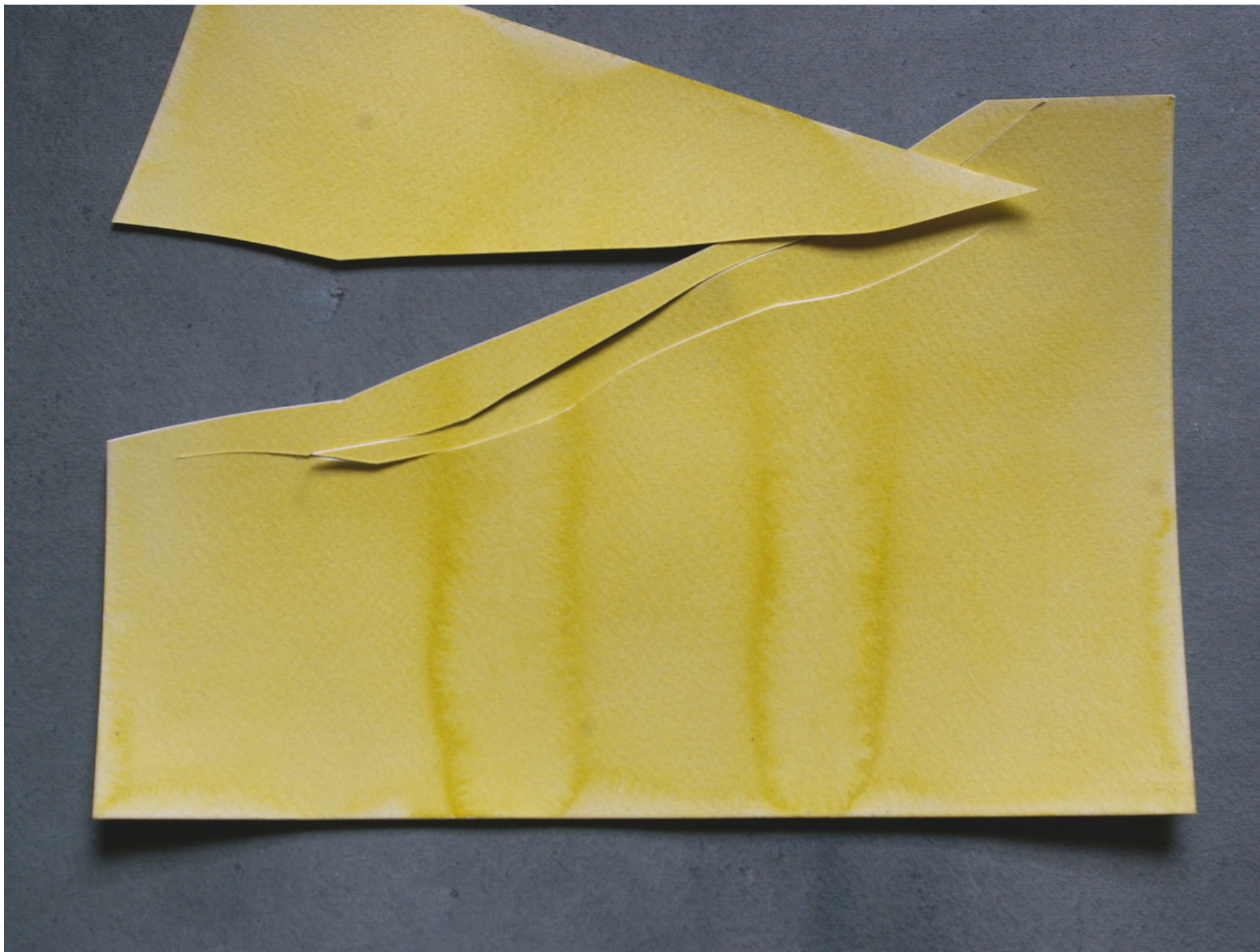




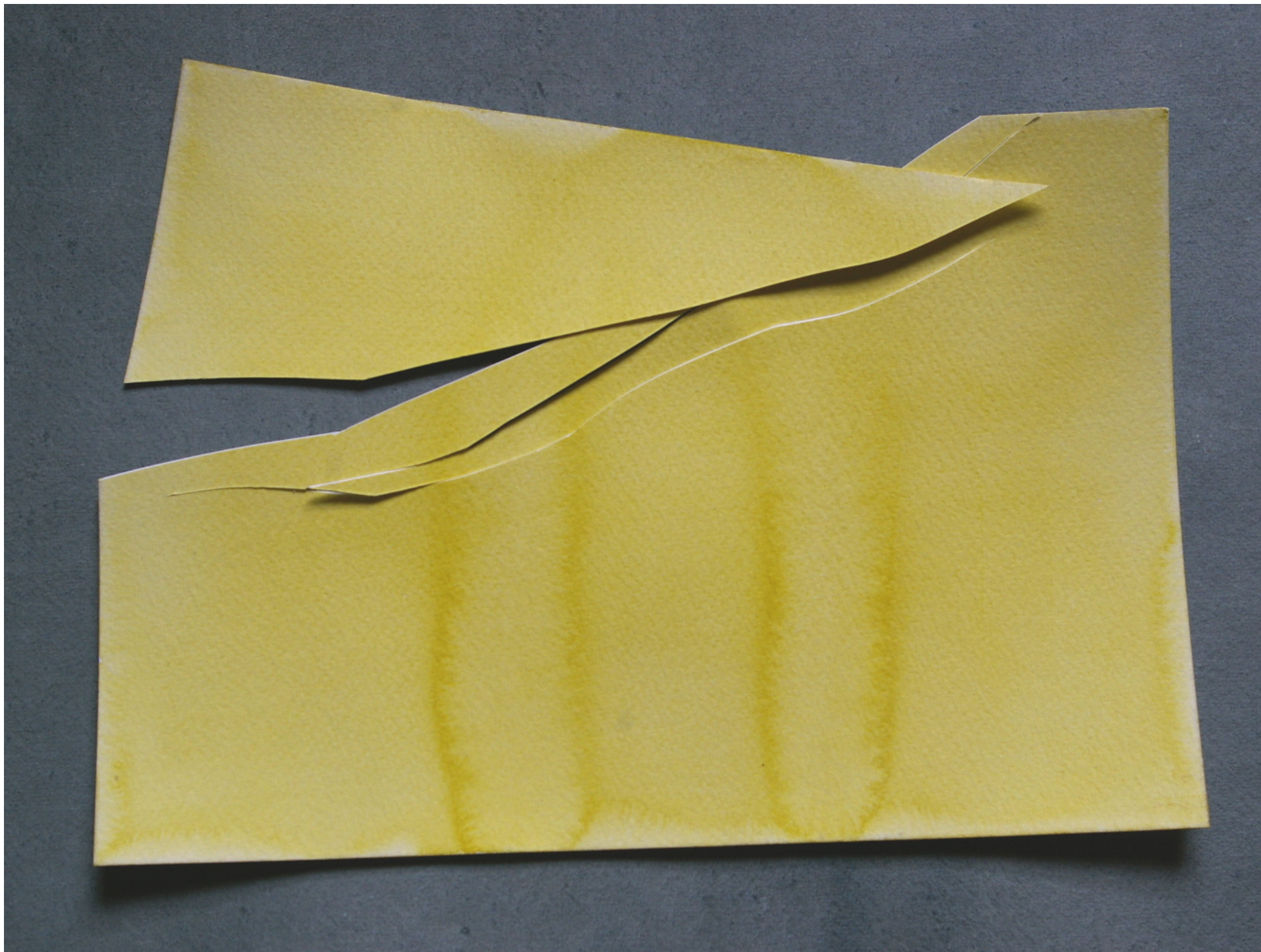




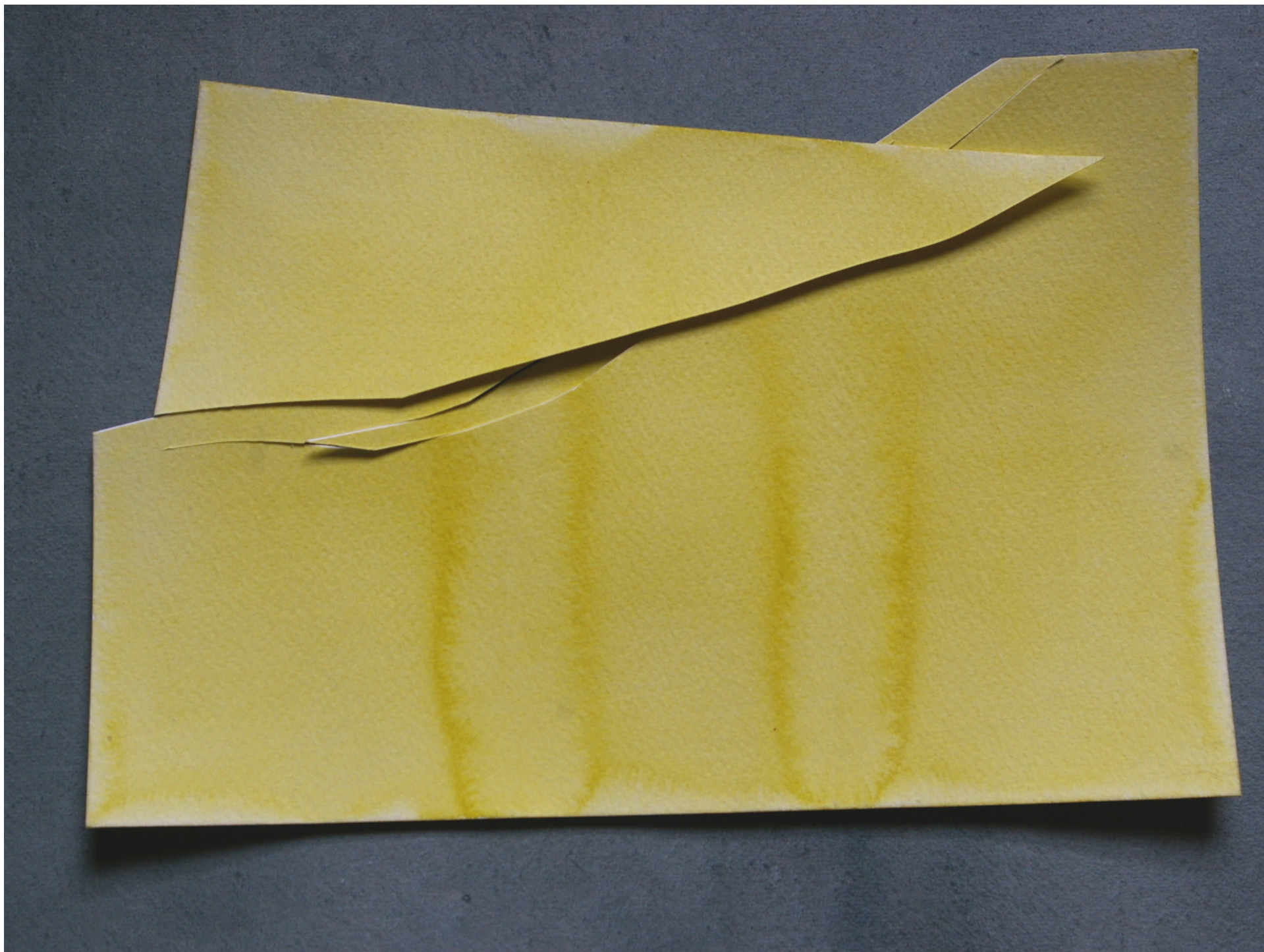




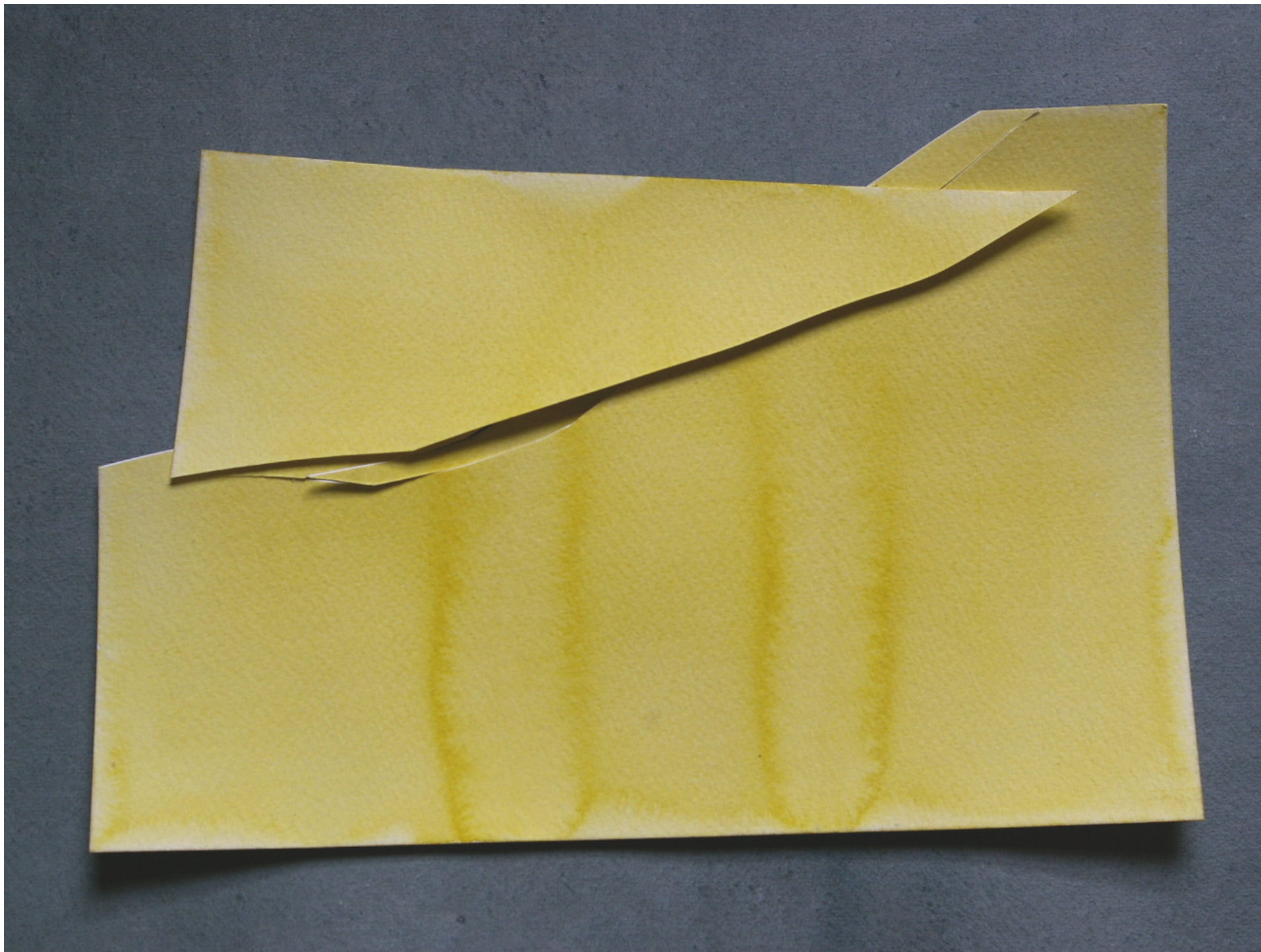








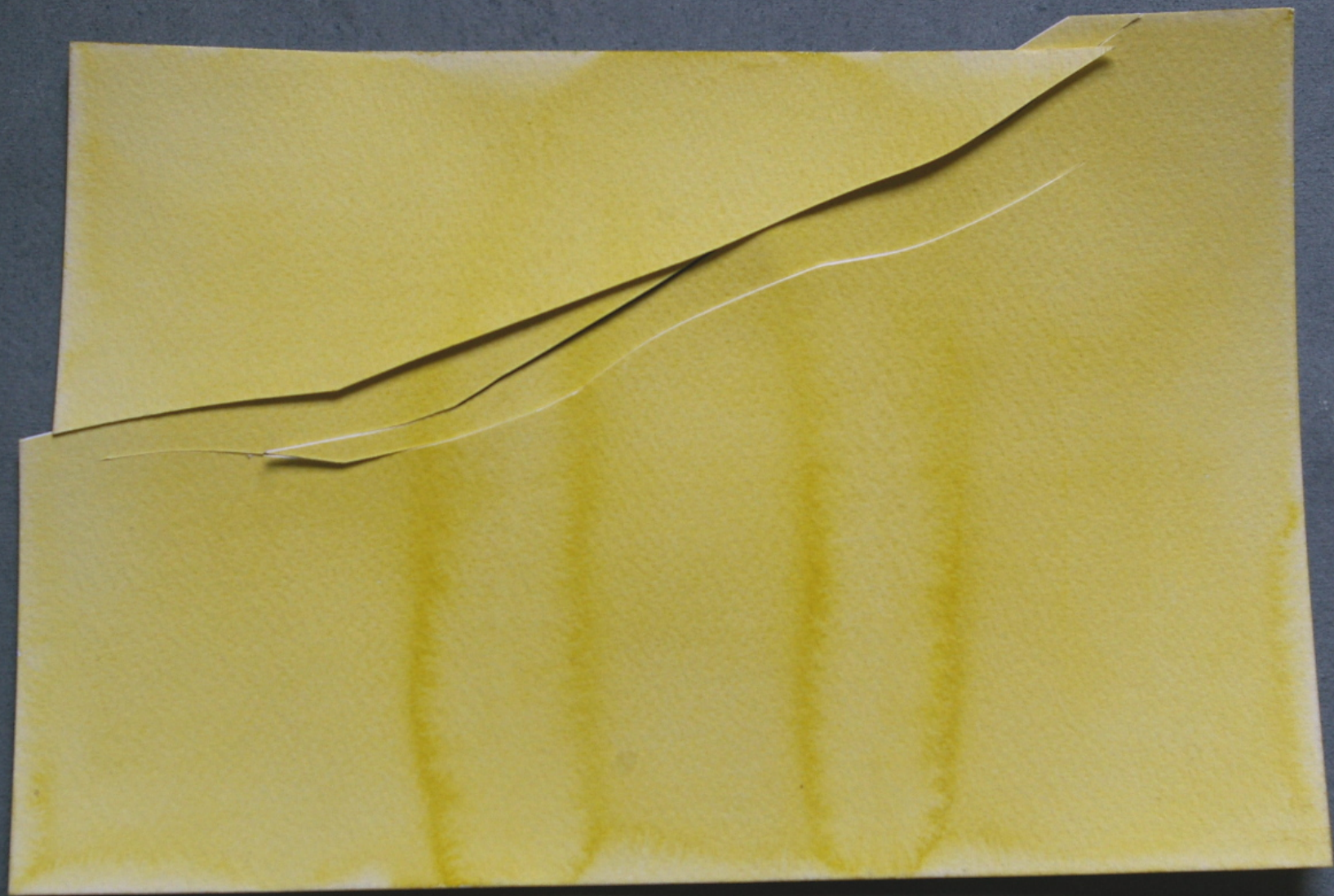








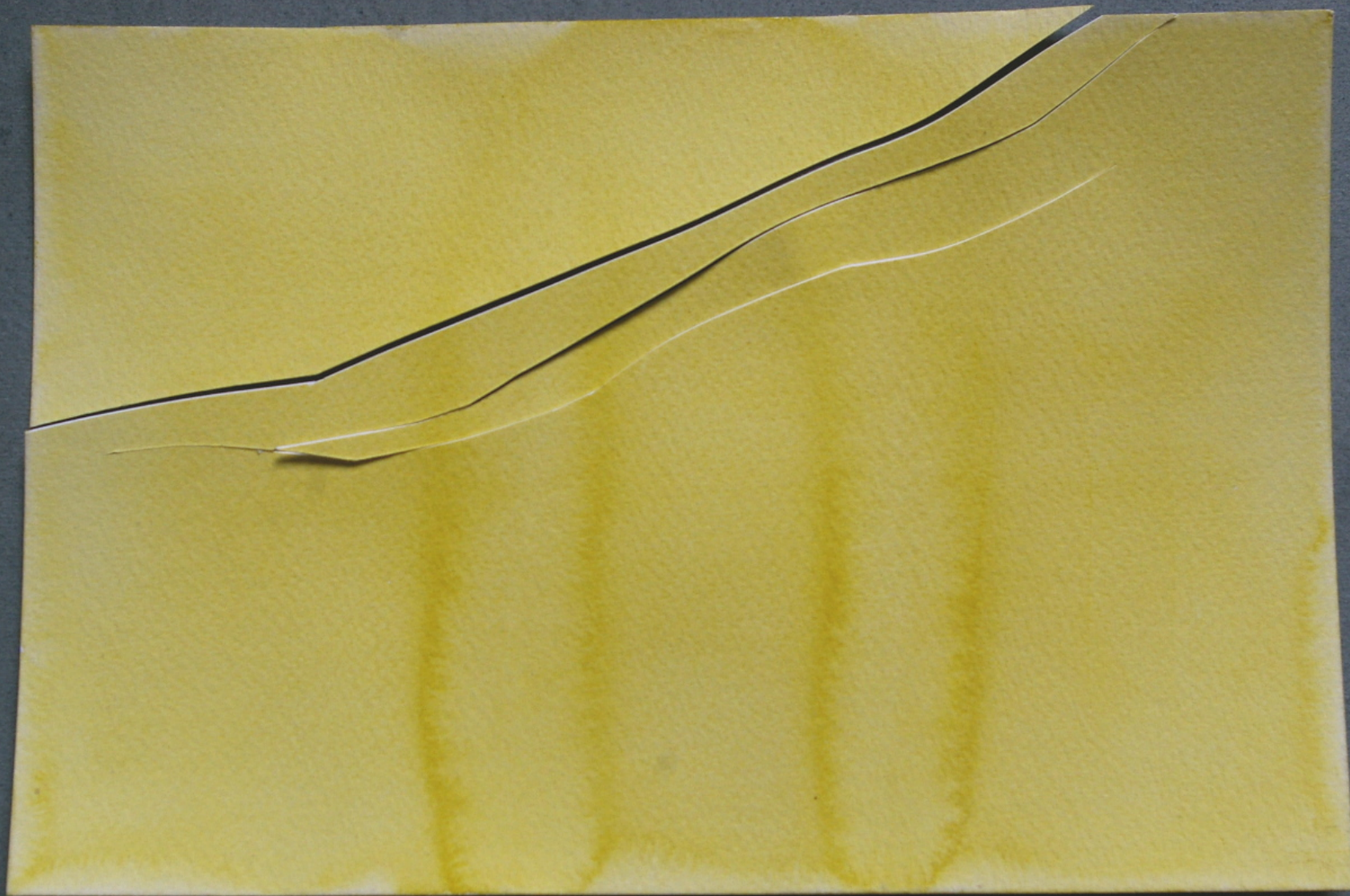










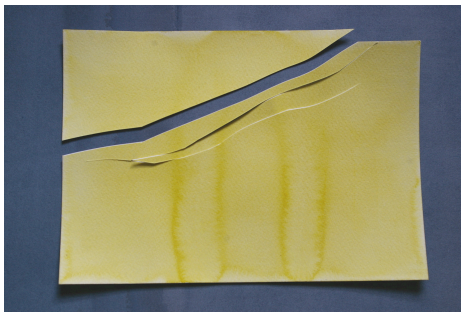




## APPENDIX 9

*HORIZON/LINE & HORIZON PPT*  
+  
*HORIZON/LINE DVD*

## APPENDIX 9



HORIZON I & HORIZON/LINE  
GOLD CUTS

# HORIZON 1

A SERIES OF STUDIES ON LOCATION IN ST.PAIR & OUISTERHAM  
FRANCE, AND NORFOLK, ENGLAND































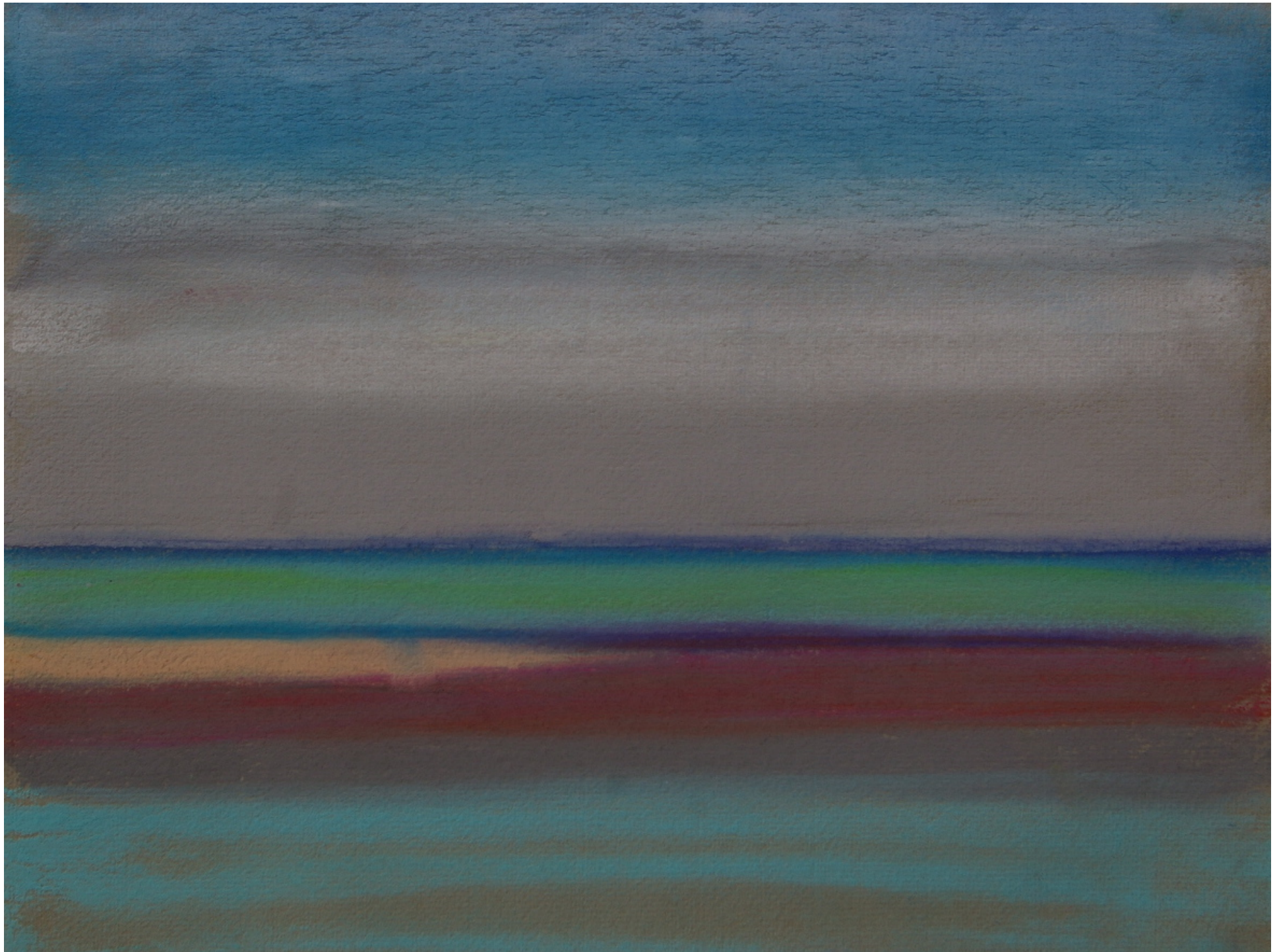
















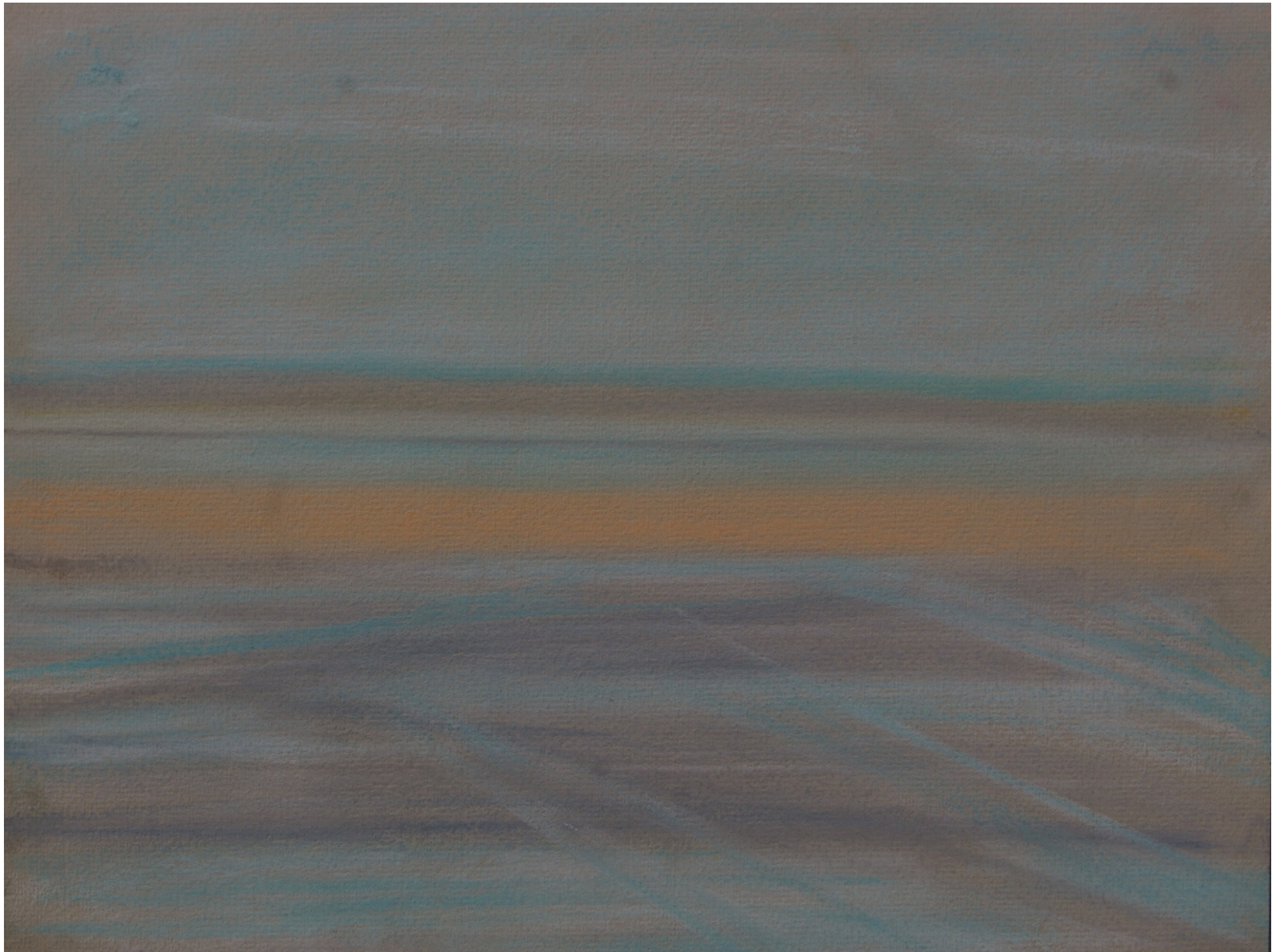




















































































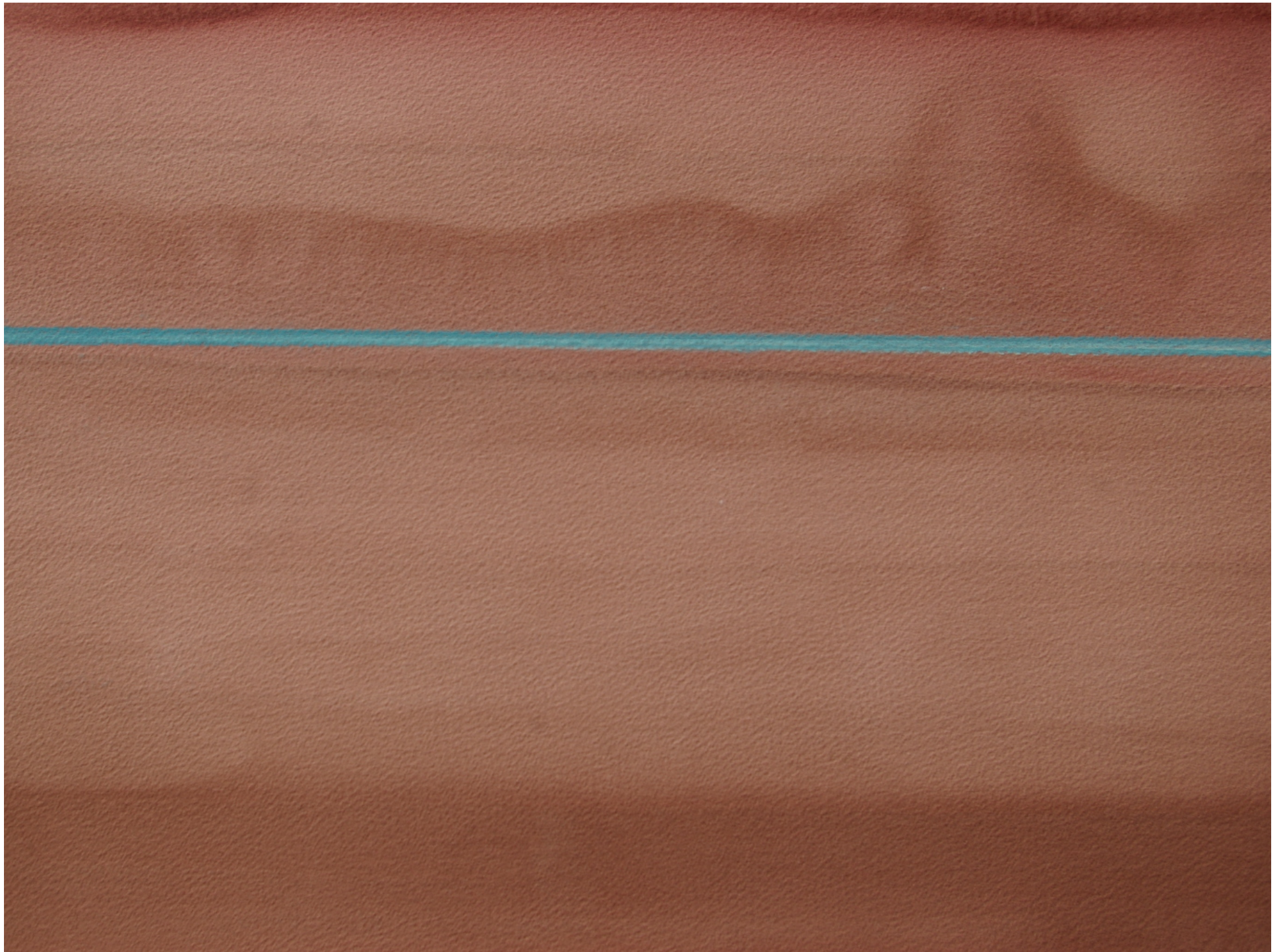






























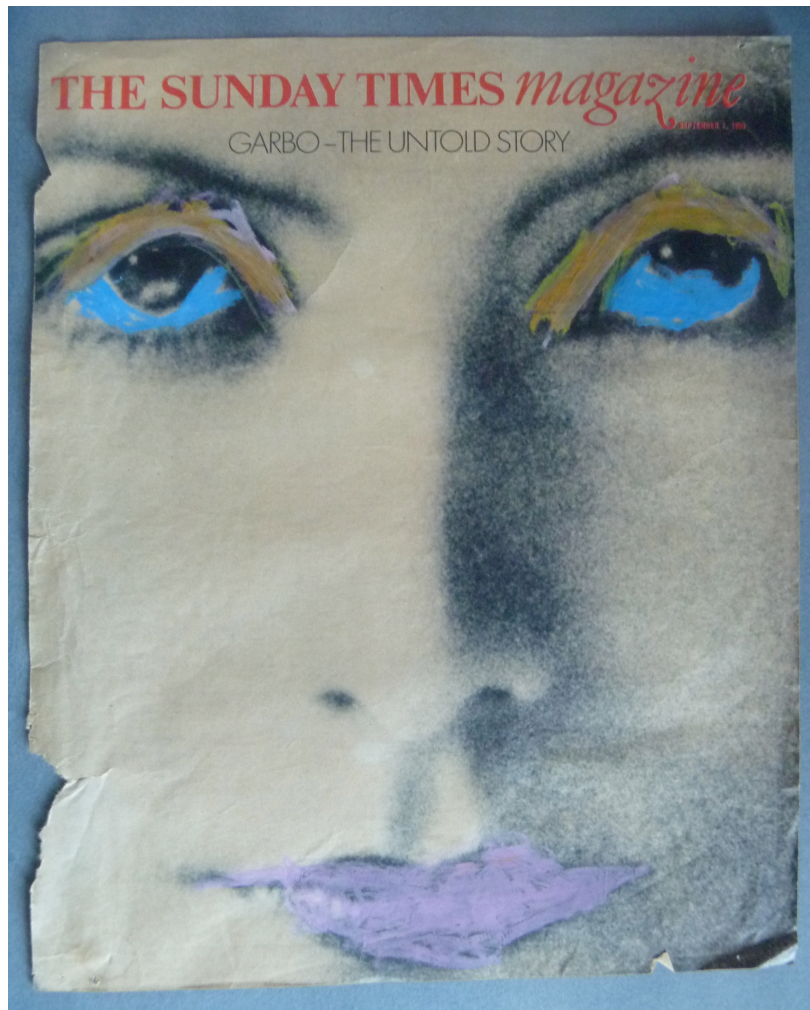


## APPENDIX 10

### *WHAT CHILDREN MAKE OF THINGS & WHAT WE MAKE OF THEM*

Documentation of doctoral exhibition, September 2013.

WHAT CHILDREN MAKE OF THINGS & WHAT WE MAKE OF THEM



VERONICA WEST

SEPTEMBER 12TH - OCTOBER 4TH 2013

CADMAN FINE ART STUDIOS

STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE ROAD, STOKE-ON-TRENT ST4 2DE

AN EXHIBITION PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT  
OF STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF  
PHILOSOPHY



The enquiry is fundamentally about the nature of perception, and particularly what happens when we see something 'as' something. It is also about what happens when we, or a child, see something and immediately want to do something with it: turn it into something else, appropriate it for our own purposes, or see it as symbolic. The work explores what it is that sets off the process of making something *out of*, or *into* something and then what happens along the way. This enquiry started because of my astonishment at what I saw the children making out of things at a very early age.

The thesis begins with an investigation into children's processes of drawing, through an interpretation of the work of Georges-Henri Luquet 1876 – 1965, who was the first to make a 'longitudinal' study of his own daughter's drawings in 1913. Luquet's work is interrogated first, by additional empirical evidence, and second, by drawing philosophical resources from both Bergson, and from Phenomenology, with reference in particular to Husserl and Heidegger.

The exhibition is arranged in three distinct yet related parts: the archive of children's work that includes certain key examples which triggered the beginning of my enquiry; an installation of pieces that came about as a consequence of experimentation with found objects (*Plot 74*); and a series of paintings and drawings which have continued throughout my studies, the *Horizon/Line Series* which I reflect on at length in the thesis as a means of exploring the nature of intuition.

One of the most important principles underlying the work shown in the archive, is that there was no request or demand made upon the children to make any of the examples shown here, or in the much larger collection of which this is only a small part. The images and objects were made entirely spontaneously by the children and were part of their everyday life. The thesis is posited on the belief that it is only through non-intrusive attention and observation that it is possible to gain the insights necessary to begin to understand the nature of their processes.

VMW 9/2013



